FBIS DAILY REPORT

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INTERIOR MINISTER REVIEWS STATUS OF PRISONERS

PY082021Y Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 0240 GMT 8 Dec

[Excerpts] Santa Fe, 7 Dec (NA)--Interior Minister Albano Harguindeguy said here tonight that the number of "terrorists under arrest is now just over half of what it was 1 and 1/2 years ago. They are constantly being released."

The minister made these remarks during a dialog with reporters just before he returned to the federal capital. When asked if his ministry has plans for the release of prisoners due to the new year festivities, he said: "Traditionally, during the month of December the advisory commissions in charge of studying the prisoners' cases work very hard to order many releases, which I hope will take place so that we will have much fewer than half of what we had."

Harguindeguy said that these decisions are not made "out of whims or the good will of the interior minister" but are decisions made "by the advisory organizations in charge of the problems of detainees." "The Interior Ministry has no plans in this regard because this would mean that the release of detainees would be subjected to chance or the whims of the interior minister."

He was also asked about the report that "the military junta has discussed the possible release of Raul Lastiri [Justicialist Party leader]." Harquindeguy firmly said: "I do not know if this matter was discussed. I have not heard that kind of report. That is not news but journalistic reports with headlines to sell their newspapers. These are not journalists but press merchants."

In response to a reporter's question on the situation of the former president, General Harguindeguy said: "You know perfectly well that she is under arrest at her residence, at the disposal of the military junta in accordance with the act of institutional responsibility. Nothing has changed since the day she was sent to her San Vicente residence."

ARMY CHIEF CONFIRMS CONFIDENCE IN VIDELA

PY081853Y Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 6 Dec 78 p 8 PY

[Excerpt] Lt Gen Roberto Viola, commander in chief of the army, stated that it is "absolutely true" that he confirmed the army's confidence in Gen Jorge Rafael Videla's presidential management during a recent meeting with high-ranking retired officers.

Asked about the reason why such a confirmation was necessary, Viola said that "A NUMBER OF MALICIOUS RUMORS WHICH HAVE BEEN HEARD LATELY--SINCE THE LAST DAYS OF OCTOBER, TO BE EXACT--MADE SUCH A CONFIRMATION OF CONFIDENCE NECESSARY AND TIMELY."

Viola made these remarks to the newspaper LA TRIBUNA in Rosario, where he had gone to participate at a dinner given by a local newsmen's organization.

FORMER SENATOR REVEALS SECRET POLITICAL PROJECT

PY081235Y Paris AFP in Spanish 2243 GMT 7 Dec 78 PY

[Text] Paris, 7 Dec (AFP)--Hipolito Solari Irigoyen, former senator of the Radical Civic Union (UCR), here today denounced the existance of an alleged top secret political project under study by the Argentine military junta.

In an article published in the monthly LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE, Solari Irigoyen analyzed a document under the title "Political Basis for National Reorganization." He pointed out that this document was probably top secret and urgent.

Solari said that the project aims at establishing a new republic loyal to its history through the application of a firm, appropriate and pragmatic strategy, disregarding the eventual holding of free elections, and that this is an obvious sign of hesitation and lack of conviction in the process of national reconstruction. The former senator also said that the project foresees the creation of a dominant political force favorable to the government, which will dominate the system of parties and which will have to have the support of the state.

Solari emphasized, however, that the plan establishes that the leaders will not be imposed but rather selected from municipal elections in which only the candidates who have accepted the doctrine of the current military government will participate. Solari also said that the elected citizens will be the base of government allies, but may be replaced by government decision. They must create two political parties, both supporters of the process of national reorganization.

The former senator explained that the plan establishes that only after the two political parties have been consolidated, and not before, will provincial and national elections be held.

Solari charged that the authors of the project under study by the Argentine military believe that the plan must not be discussed with current Argentine political leaders or be submitted to a referendum, since this would be equal to restating the people's demagogic concept.

PERONIST LEADERS HOLD COORDINATION MEETING

PY072302Y Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2255 GMT 6 Dec 78 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (NA)--Several Peronist leaders met last night in the house of former Interior Minister Benito Llambi for dinner under the invitation of the party's first vice president, Deolindo Felipe Bittel. This meeting is believed to be an intent of the Verticalist leaders to come to agreement with other groups of the party.

The dinner was attended by former Ministers Miguel Unamuno, Angel Federico Robledo, Roberto Ares and Alberto Corvalan Nanclareso; former Senators Italo Luder, Alejandro Diaz Bialet and Vicente Saadi; and Oscar Albrieu, Manuel de Anchorena, Alberto Corvalan Nanclares, Jose Maria Sarra and Ricardo Guardo.

With the purpose of achieving the unity of Peronism's different leanings, Bittel held a meeting with Jorge Daniel Paladino, who was Juan Domingo Peron's personal delegate until 1972.

Paladino, who during the last Peronist government stayed away from the movement, today had lunch with Bittel, Miguel Unamuno, Paulino Niembro and Roberto Ares.

Bittel resides in the Chaco and arrived in Buenos Aires last weekend after signing a communique recommending that Peronists abstain from attending the dinner held last Friday by the Association of Former Legislators which was attended by the president.

Bittel's request was partially obeyed, as some former Peronist legislators attended the dinner.

Last Sunday, Bittel, Unamuno and others met at the Glew ranch, 30 km south of Buenos Aires, with leaders of other parties such as the Intransigent Party, the Christian Revolutionary Party, the Communist Party and several socialist parties in order to set a common strategy.

All of these parties signed a declaration a few weeks ago, harshly criticizing the national situation.

According to the agreement reached at the Glew ranch, these parties will invite other parties to join in.

In view of this agreement, it is expected that in the next few hours Bittle and other leaders will meet with former President Arturo Frondizi to get the support of his Developmentist group.

Besides the main issues of party unity and the negotiations carried out with other political organizations, the Peronist leaders discussed the situation of the former president and exchanged ideas on the border conflict with Chile.

JUSTICIALIST PARTY, MID LEADERS MEET

PY081245Y Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2250 GMT 7 Dec 78 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 7 Dec (NA)--According to reliable sources Deolindo Felipe Bittel, first vice president of the Justicialist Party, and Arturo Frondizi, head of the Integration and Development Movement (MID), today studied political and economic aspects of the institutional process and agreed to form interparty work groups to study national problems. According to the report, the meeting was held at the private residence of an unidentified Peronist leader in the Belgrano neighborhood, and lasted 2 hours.

Bittel, who is replacing Maria Estela Martinez de Peron as head of the party, was accompanied by party member Miguel Unamuno, and Frondizi was accompanied by MID leader Domingo Curuchelar.

According to the report, the Justicialist and MID leaders reviewed the development of the current process and the border conflict with Chile in relation to its influence on the internal Argentine situation. It was also learned that Bittel, Frondizi and the other two leaders agreed on their criticism of the current economic policies and felt that the process of democratization of the current institutional stage is very slow.

The meeting held by Frondizi and Bittel today followed the meeting held last night by several Peronist leaders called by the first vice president of the Justicialist Party and interpreted as an intent by the Verticalist group to unite the party's internal opinions.

ARMY COMMANDER SEES END OF SUBVERSION

PY051705Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0435 GMT 5 Dec 78 PY

[Excerpts] Rosario, 4 Dec (TELAM)--The commander in chief of the army, Lt Gen Roberto Eduardo Viola, has said that "subversion no longer has any influence in Argentine life and is no longer an important element in the current national situation, which permits us to conceive and build a future without the distortions created by its presence." These remarks by the military chief in answer to a questionnaire were made at the end of the annual dinner of the Santa Fe Province Chamber of Advertisers where General Viola was the guest of honor.

He explained that the eradication of subversion should not be considered as the ultimate goal, but as a prior, basic and necessary step to fulfill the objectives of the armed forces when they intervened in the national political process on 24 March 1976. In this regard, he indicated that in view of disintegration and chaos, the objective set on that date was aimed at reconstructing the essential elements and image of the nation and reestablishing the equilibrium to obtain a free and just society.

General Viola warned that this undoubtedly requires profound changes, and time is needed

He recalled that the process of national reorganization was not limited to a specific social sector, political party or economic system, but to correct existing deficiencies, recognize and guide its factors and ...

ENVOY TO CHILE RETURNS TO BUENOS AIRES

PY081525Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2135 GMT 8 Dec 78 PY

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 8 Dec (TELAM)--Argentine ambassador to Chile, Dr. Leopoldo Mario Pita[illegible] (ret), said after his arrival at the Ezeiza International Airport this afternoon that it is [illegible] a peaceful government; the cause of justice and equity should prevail in order to find a solution to the border conflict in the southern region.

With regard to the possible mediation of a third country, he is convinced it will be necessary [illegible] to reach this solution by the foreign ministers of Argentina and Chile, Dr. Carlos Washington Pastor (ret) and Hernan Cubillos, bilateral talks have not been taken and that it would not be wise to make assumptions.

Asked his particular opinion about the conflict, he said that he has already stated that he does not feel optimistic or pessimistic, with regard to the evolution of the situation, he said that as long as conversations are carried out there is a possibility of reaching an agreement because it is in the conversations and negotiations that the two parties can explain their positions.

He added that he did not know of anything new on this matter. He said that the desire of the two countries to find a solution is well known, but he did not know of anything new.

OPPOSITION PARTIES AGREE TO ELECTION PLANS

PY081923Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1817 GMT 8 Dec 78 PY

[By Eduardo Perez Iribarne]

[Excerpt] La Paz, 8 Dec (AFP)--It was pointed out here today that the Bolivian military government joined the first political parties today, when the opposition accepted the electoral plans. Yesterday, eight parties, among them the Bolivian Socialist Falange Party, the Christian Democratic Party, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, and the Nationalist Democratic Action Party, met with Interior Minister Col Luis Pino Gutierrez. The meeting was held in the Ministry of Interior, Immigration and Justice building and lasted for more than 3 hours. [Pino Gutierrez] said that the meeting was held to discuss the electoral plans announced [for the proclaimed Mago Quiroz for the presidential candidacy]

The main invited groups are former President Hernan Siles Zuazo's Democratic and Popular Unity Front [UDP], former President Victor Paz Estenssoro's Nationalist Revolutionary Movement [MNR], Manuel Morales Davila's Revolutionary Bloc of the Left [BRI], and Gualberto Vegarra's Christian Democratic Party [PDC].

The meetings may lead to an agreement between government and opposition on the electoral campaign for the general elections on 1 July 1979, the content of the electoral regulations, the congressional representation system and use of ballots.

PRIVATE SECTOR ASSURED OF PLOTTING AGAINST ELECTIONS

PY091907 La Paz Radio Fammerique Antenne in Spanish 0000 GMT 9 Dec 78 PY

[Text] Interior Ministry security organizations uncovered a political meeting held with anti-electoral purposes in Cochabamba, sponsored by the private sector, [words indistinct] of Cochabamba today [words indistinct] that [the] Interior Ministry has known of the meeting held last night in Cochabamba, and that no pressing measures were adopted so as to not disrupt the electoral process;

In reply to questions of local newsmen, Colonel Lopez Leyton said:

[Begin Lopez Leyton recording] We have uncovered and we know the names of the persons who attended the meeting held last night in Cochabamba.

[Question] What measures were adopted by the government?

[Answer] Well, I notified--through the prefect of Cochabamba--those persons who sponsored the meeting [words indistinct] that I know every detail of what was discussed there. If necessary, we will take the appropriate measures in due course. [end recording]

Therefore, quoting the minister himself, the Interior Ministry knows the names of the persons who attended this meeting of a subversive nature which had the principal goal of disrupting the electoral process.

[Begin Lopez Leyton recording] He reaffirmed his accusation as follows: A meeting was held last night in Cochabamba. This meeting was practically designed to disrupt the democratization process in which the military junta government is now engaged.

[Question] Was the meeting attended by (?military officers)?

[Answer] [Words indistinct] No, I don't think so.

[Question] Of what tendency were the people who attended the meeting?

[Answer] The private sector. [end recording]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible

The bipartite talks were chaired by Gen Antonio Rojas Montalvo, chief of the general staff of the Bolivian Army, and Gen Ludwig Essenwanger, chief of the Peruvian Armed Forces joint general staff.

During the closing ceremony of the military meeting held in the flag room of the military Aeronautics club, General Essenwanger stated that "when the [results of the] talks held during this work meeting materialize, we are certain that they will serve as an example of the correct way in which one can live in peace and sincere understanding." He stressed that this was a result of the maturity with which our armed forces conduct harmony and good neighborliness between our countries. He said that the agreements reached by the highest-ranking officers of both armies will lead us to the road of peace and friendship which should guide the people of the American Continent."

In turn, General Rojas Montalvo pointed out that the "historic mission of our two nations keeps the flame of American justice alive vis-a-vis a treacherous and cunning enemy whether toward all the trickery of a colonialist international policy."

That view was interpreted as a direct allusion to Chile, which during the 1879 Pacific war left Bolivia without an access to the sea and Peru without the Province of Tarapaca.

The military chiefs who participated in the meeting denied signing a "mutual defense pact in case of aggression" but they did sign a document in which they pledged to cooperation for the sake of peace. They said that the results of the bilateral talks will be reported to the high military commands of the two countries, and then the results will be definitively approved during the next meeting to be held in Lima, Peru, on a still unspecified date.

The meeting of the military leaders of Bolivia and Peru took place on the eve of the celebration of the centennial of the war of the Pacific and was obviously marked by reserve.

Accord Signed

PY030223Y La Paz Radio Panamericana Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 9 Dec 78 PY

[Relay from Santa Cruz]

[Excerpt] The first meeting of representatives of the Bolivian and Peruvian Armed Forces concluded here today at 1300 in a ceremony held at the aeronautics club. This meeting, which was held from 4 to 8 December, was designed to prepare a meeting of commanders in chief to be held in Lima in the near future.

At this ceremony, the presidents of the Bolivian and Peruvian military delegations, Gen Antonio Rojas Montalvo and Ludwig Essenwanger Sanchez, respectively, signed a peace and friendship agreement which includes the following projects:

A cooperation agreement to reinforce peace and friendship between the Bolivian and Peruvian Armed Forces; organic regulations for bipartite meetings between the Bolivian and Peruvian Armed Forces; practical measures to promote friendship and cooperation between the two armed forces; regulations for exchanging information, consultations and special meetings; bipartite agreements on exchange of information and military activities, especially in border areas; and the appointment of responsible officers.

BRAZILIAN, GDR CONSORTIUMS DISCUSS TRADE PROJECTS

PY091600Y Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 8 Dec 78 p 20 PY

[Text] Brazilian and GDR enterprises will participate in the construction and assembly of the largest textile factory in Peru. This type of association for joint undertakings in third countries was one of the main topics discussed in a meeting of consortiums of the two countries which ended yesterday at Itamaraty.

The meeting was held to give Brazilian and GDR enterprises the opportunity to evaluate for the first time the practical results of the memorandum of understanding signed by the two countries last July, laying down the basis for joint business undertakings worth $1.2 billion over a 3-year period.

The Brazilian consortium, coordinated by Itamaraty's East Europe division chief, is composed of the Brazilinvest, COBEC [Brazilian Warehouses and Trade Company], INTERBRAS [Brazilian Petroleum Corporation International Trade], FRUTESP [expansion unknown], Port Trading and Still Companies.

The East German group, coordinated by the director general of the Foreign Trade Ministry, Werner Haenold, is composed of the state companies Nahrung-Genussmittel (soybeans and minerals), Commerz (textiles), Elektrotechnik (electronic equipment), Unitechna (machinery and equipment), Intrac (imports and exports in general) and Bergbau-Handel (iron and ore exclusively).

Some of the sessions held by the consortiums of the two countries were attended by the GDR deputy minister of foreign trade, Wilhelm Bastian, who was visiting Brasilia for the third time in a year--in November 1977, May 1978, and now in December.

GDR-Brazilian bilateral trade totaled $150 million last year ($120 million in Brazilian exports plus $30 million in GDR exports), and this year it should total $170 million or even $200 million, leaning heavily in Brazil's favor.

The next meeting of the Brazilian and GDR consortiums will be held in East Berlin sometime before July 1979. At the 3-day meeting just ended, various joint projects were discussed, one of them the construction and assembly in Peru of a textile factory having 50,000 spindles. In this project the GDR will supply all the weaving machinery and Brazil all other types of equipment plus the installation work.

Werner Haenold revealed that his country's government is willing to open a $200-million line of credit for Brazil. An agreement has already been reached that next year the GDR will import 1 million bags of coffee and 1 million tons of soybeans while exporting 1.2 million tons of fertilizer.

BRIEFS

BRITISH ARMY CHIEF VISITS--General Roland Gibbs, chief of staff of the British Army, is now visiting Brazil, where he met with Army Minister Gen Fernando Belfort Bethlem and other high-ranking officers of the Brazilian Armed Forces. [Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 6 Dec 78 p 11 PY]

WAGNER EXTRADITION REQUESTED--An FRG delegation headed by Wilhelm Schneider, director of the FRG Justice Ministry, yesterday went to Itamaraty and the Justice Ministry to deliver a request for the extradition of Gustav Franz Wagner, the Nazi war criminal who is in jail in Brazil. [Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 5 Dec 78 p 22 PY]

RESOLUTION ON ELECTION RESULTS ISSUED

PA082059Y Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1730 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Text of resolution issued by the Ecuadorean Supreme Electoral Tribunal on 7 December 1978--read by unidentified speaker; recorded]

[Text] The Supreme Electoral Tribunal, in compliance with the provisions of Decree No 3075 of 5 December 1978, and in view of the foregoing certification regarding the number of valid votes received by each of the slates of candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency of the republic during the 16 July 1978 elections, resolves:

1. To proclaim the following result of the elections in question:

Sixto Duran Ballen-Jose Icaza Roldos	328,461 votes
Raul Clemente Huertas-Arsenio Vivanco Neira	311,983 votes
Jaime Roldos Aguilera-Osvaldo Hurtado Larrea	381,215 votes
Rene Mauge Mosquera-Anival Munoz Quirola	75,187 votes
Rodrigo Borjas Cevallos-Raul Baca Carbo	165,258 votes
Abdon Calderon Munoz-Edgar Molina Montalvo	124,347 votes

2. Therefore, it declares that the slates made up of Sixto Duran Ballen-Jose Icaza Roldos and Jaime Roldos Aguilera-Osvaldo Hurtado Larrea are those that, according to the elections law and the aforementioned decree, have the right to participate as candidates in the second electoral round on 8 April 1979.

Dated 7 December 1978

Signed by: Gustavo Chavez Estrella, president
Fidel Ponce Jaramillo, vice president
Carlos Silva, member
Jose Gabriel Teran Varea, member
Jose Hanna Muse, member
Eduardo Zurita Rosero, member
Jaime Vallejo Benavides, acting secretary
of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal

GOVERNMENT LIFTS BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

PA091941Y Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1730 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Quito--Government Minister Gustavo Jarrin, in response to a reporter's question during a news conference, said that public meetings and political activities are now authorized. He explained that such activities had been suspended only until after the proclamation of the recent election results and the convoking to the second electoral round. Since all that has been accomplished, these activities are no longer prohibited, and the citizens can begin such activities today if they want to do so.

SPOKESMEN DISCUSS FAILURE OF PARANA TALKS

PY091443Y Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 8 Dec p 3 PY

[By special correspondent Felix Humberto Paiva]

[Excerpt] Punta del Este, 7 Dec--The real reason for the failure of the negotiations during the tripartite meeting on reconciling interests in the Parana River, held in this resort city, was the absence of a concrete Argentine proposal explaining how the increase in the turbines for Itaipu could harm the Corpus project.

Authorized spokesmen of the Paraguayan delegation have said that "the Argentine delegation never made a specific proposal or technically proved how the increase in the turbines for Itaipu could harm Corpus. It adhered to the idea that the increase in the turbines introduced a new element in the negotiations and that it had to be discussed all over again."

They also said that "significant progress was not made in the negotiations, but also there was no retreat from positions. Not even a new date for a future meeting was agreed on. Therefore, we can say that everything remains as before."

They emphasized that "Argentina has tried to take advantage of a situation which does not harm it, and it is impossible to make progress in the negotiations under these conditions."

Regarding the talks themselves, the Paraguayan negotiators said that "Argentina did not make a concrete proposal stating its position. Therefore, Paraguay responded in the same manner as before: Failing to install the two additional turbines would be harmful to us, but it would not provide any advantage to Argentina. Thus, there would be harm done to one party and no benefit to the other. Therefore, there is no balance in the two positions."

The spokesmen also pointed out that "we Paraguayans believe that this wealth we have, the only large source of energy our country has at this time, must be thoroughly guarded and must not be sacrificed at any cost."

Observers who attended the meetings in this city agreed that the failure of the tripartite negotiations is a hard blow from the political viewpoint to Argentina, which urgently needed a triumph for its position in order to face with greater support its negotiations with Chile on the burning issue of the Beagle Channel.

Observers also have said that Argentina has released some press commentaries exercising some pressure on Paraguay and Brazil aimed at obtaining some advantage in the negotiations.

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONGRESS OPENS

PY091546Y Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 9 Dec 78 p 10 PY

[Excerpts] In the presence of a great number of people who filled the auditorium and corridors of Radio Charitas, the first national human rights congress, which seeks to create awareness on this subject among the citizens, was opened last night. There were speeches by representatives of the Commission for the Defense of Human Rights in Paraguay (organizer of the event), the Catholic Church and the European Justice and Peace Council of the Holy See.

After the singing of the national anthem to the accompaniment of Alejandro Cubilla's Coygua brass band, Mrs Carmen de Lara Castro, president of the organizing commission, addressed those present and pointed out that the opening of the congress coincides with an event which is very dear to the Paraguayan people--the day of the Virgin of Caacupe.

She explained that 30 years after the signing of the universal human rights declaration, those rights are still ignored by the signatories themselves, and she appealed to the audience to have as a guiding light that declaration, in whose defense many people have even lost their lives.

She observed that the congress will not judge, "despite the fact that just judges are needed, and we will not attack anyone because we are only inspired by the wish to defend our oppressed brothers, despite the fact that there are hearts which do not understand the loss of life by some of our countrymen to achieve their freedom."

After pointing out that an army of conscientious citizens is needed, who should act without violence but also without wavering she said that not only the executioners are to blame. "If they exist, it is because of our indifference and cowardice." She added: "We are against violence wherever it may be, in Cuba, Russia or Paraguay, because institutionalized violence generates violence."

When mentioning the mothers and wives of political prisoners "who are knocking on door after door, and the sons who are compelled to abondon their fatherland," she could not hold back her tears, which deeply moved some of those present.

Jeronimo Irala Burgos, vice president of the organizing commission, referred to the objectives of the congress. After outlining the long effort of mankind for the achievement of human rights, he explained that the struggle is centered on the right to life and physical integrity, the fundamental rights basic to the happiness of man (food, health, shelter, etc), and civic and political liberties (freedom of thought and assembly and of contributing with patriotism, ability and honesty to Paraguayan redemption).

He stated clearly that the organizing commission undertakes the defense of human rights from the Christian point of view and made a call "to those who have had the courage to appear here with uncovered faces to struggle for the revolutionary cause of human dignity."

Msgr Jorge Livieres Banks, on behalf of the Paraguayan Catholic Church, added his voice of encouragement for the enhancement of human rights. He said: "This voice should cause no surprise because the church can only look favorably upon any effort which is made in defense of our dispossessed and oppressed brothers." He recalled the words spoken by Pope John Paul II and the stand taken by the Paraguayan church against injustice, explaining that all its pastoral action is a service to the people.

The ceremony was attended by U.S. Ambassador Robert White, high-ranking officials from the British and German embassies, leaders of political parties and independent movements, intellectuals, well-known professionals, and relatives of political prisoners.

The organizing commission has had many supporters, among whom Defense Minister Marcial Samaniego and the Popular Colorado Movement [MOPOCO] are prominent. Among those present were also Margarita Wilde, Disciples of Christ [United States]; Wendy Turdhel (Amnesty International); Carlos Jose Ghislandi of the National Pastoral Bishops Conference of Brazil, representatives of justice and peace in Latin America.

PRESIDENT MENDEZ STRESSES SOCIAL, ECONOMIC REALITIES

PY090231Y Montevideo Radio Carve Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 9 Dec 78 PY

[Excerpts] President Aparicio Mendez again delivered an important speech in Rocha at the end of his visit to this department. After meeting with local leaders, the chief of state referred to various matters of national interest.

President Aparicio Mendez said that the people are beginning to have confidence in the government and that it is important to eliminate the word privilege. He said that the people, considering the equal possibilities offered by the government, must have faith in achieving success because there will be no privileges for anybody.

The chief of state also emphasized the importance of greater private initiative in the country, saying that this proves the confidence of the people in the measures being implemented by the military-civilian government. He said that it is up to the people to stand up and work and that all the government should do is provide help and protection. He said that the greatness of a nation is in the work of the people, while the government only provides cooperation and support.

The president also emphasized the importance of private initiative with regard to industrial decentralization; that is, the installation of factories in the interior of the country. Mendez said that one of great ills of Uruguay is centralization; that is, most of the industries are located in Montevideo or nearby, but now due to the new impetus given by private initiative, new agro industrial centers are being created all over the country. He said that if decentralization is achieved, Uruguay will be making a great step forward.

The president also emphasized, referring to the Rocha department, the works being carried out to recover flooded areas for use in agriculture.

With regard to the activities being carried out by private enterprise in Uruguay, president Mendez said:

[Begin Mendez recording] We must give protection to capable men and useful enterprises within this process of national integration. This may be difficult to do but if we do not understand this fact, we will continue to have unproductive enterprises, incompetent personnel and doubtful situations. The world of economy is the hard world of confronting realities, and only by confronting it can we progress. Those who want to be protected and want to live under protection are wrong because we know this to be a fact: Only by being realistic will we come out ahead. This is a concept we are practicing. We have also noticed that our businessmen are becoming aware of the same concept. [end recording]

ELECTORAL COUNCIL ISSUES 'FINAL' BULLETIN

PA100411Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 0139 GMT 10 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Caracas, 9 Dec (EFE)--The final bulletin of the Supreme Electoral Council of Venezuela--issued today--gives President-elect Luis Herrera Campins, of the Social Christian Party [COPEI], an advantage of 174,990 [as received] votes over his closest rival, Luis Pinerua Ordaz, of the governing Democratic Action [AD] party. In Sunday's elections, Herrera obtained 2,469,042 "big" votes while Pinerua Ordaz received 2,295,052. Jose Vicente Rangel, the candidate of the Movement to Socialism, was third with approximately 273,000 votes.

With regard to the "small" cards to elect deputies and senators, COPEI obtained 2,086,579 votes against the 2,085,409 votes secured by AD, of social democratic leanings.

Herrera Campins will be officially proclaimed president-elect by the Supreme Electoral Council on Monday. The proclamation will be made at a ceremony in which former Chilean President Eduardo Frei and former Venezuelan chief of state Rafael Caldera will participate. Other distinguished persons will also be present. The president-elect, who will govern Venezuela during the 1979-1984 constitutional period, will assume power in March, replacing President Carlos Andres Perez.

COPEI, AD SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL AGREEMENTS

PA081230Y Caracas Radio Continente Network in Spanish 2050 GMT 7 Dec 78 PA

[Text] The Social Christian Party [COPEI] accepts the idea of a parliamentary agreement with the Democratic Action [AD] party. This announcement was made by COPEI Secretary General Dr Pedro Pablo Aguilar. He said that the desire expressed by the AD leaders to seek understandings and agreements at congressional levels for the integration of the legislative chambers was a positive concept. Likewise, there would be agreement on other important matters of national interest.

In regard to the chamber directive boards, he said that the government party's presiding over the Senate has been an advisable practice which should be maintained as an unwritten rule in democratic rule.

He said it was healthy to have agreements on the election of high-ranking officials and added that the two parties will be very balanced in the Congress and are compelled to seek understandings.

AD, COPEI RECEIVE EQUAL NUMBER OF CONGRESSMEN

PA090337Y Paris AFP in Spanish 2317 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Excerpt] Caracas, 8 Dec (AFP)--The social democratic party (Democratic Action--AD) and the Christian democratic party (COPEI) will have equal forces in the next Venezuelan Congress after having secured more than 80 percent of the congressional votes. Each of these two parties had 21 senators and 86 deputies elected. This will give them absolute control over the Congress but will force them to reach understandings with the small leftist bench [bancada] in the event of disagreements between them.

In addition to their 21 senators, AD and COPEI will have in the Senate former Presidents Romulo Betancourt and Carlos Andres Perez (social democrats) and Rafael Caldera (Christian democrat), who are lifetime senators.

Also elected to the Chamber of Deputies were: Seven candidates from the Marxist Movement to Socialism (MAS), one from the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), one from the People's Electoral Movement (MEP), and one each from the rightist MIN (National Integrity) and Common Cause movements (followers of Diego Arria).

On the basis of an electoral formula, the left will have approximately 3 senators and approximately 10 more deputies.

MIR CALLS FOR LEFTIST PARLIAMENTARY BLOC

PA090021Y Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 6 Dec 78 p 1-12 PA

[Excerpts] Yesterday, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left [MIR] officially recognized the victory of Luis Herrera Campins in the presidential elections. The announcement was made in a news conference held by the MIR national political commission headed by Secretary General Moises Moleiro. Candidate Americo Martin was also present.

In his statements, Moises Moleiro proposed the unity of the left by means of a parliamentary bloc having its own policy. We believe that now, more than ever, he emphasized, the left must take positive steps to unite. The year 1979 should be the year of unity in the field of peoples struggles and organizations. If we develop a policy for these groups and the congressional bloc, the left will make formidable advances.

Moleiro said that the social changes required by Venezuela will not be carried out by the new administration headed by Luis Herrera Campins, as can be deduced from the Social Christian Party's policies. Therefore, he concluded, we shall maintain a well-defined opposition stance within the terms of firmness, seriousness and responsibility, which characterize our conduct.

HERRERA COMMENTS ON CRUDE OIL PRICES

PA081211Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 2319 GMT 7 Dec 78 PA

[Excerpt] Caracas, 7 Dec (EFE)--Venezuelan President-elect Luis Herrera Campins affirmed today that the next OPEC meeting will be "of vital importance" and that the price of crude will "be revised fittingly." Herrera emphasized that the OPEC member countries "are searching for a currency to replace the dollar" for their transactions and that the special drawing rights "are also an aspiration" of the OPEC member countries.

Herrera Campins, who will take office in March, also announced that he plans to "diversify Venezuela's relations with all countries of the world" and that his government will be one of "consultation and dialog."

COSTA RICAN INTERIOR MINISTER INTERVIEWED ON NICARAGUA

PA081533Y Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 7 Dec 78 PA

[Fernando Eleta Casanovas interview in Panama City with Costa Rican Interior Minister Juan Jose Echeverria, no date given--recorded]

[Text] [Question] Mr Minister, it has been said that your visit to the Canal Zone could be interpreted as a message from the United States to General Somoza. Is there any truth to that?

[Answer] None. My visit to the Canal Zone is in response to a very kind invitation extended by General MacAuliffe, who was in Costa Rica recently, in September. We have reciprocated the visit, coming to see the Canal Zone and also the installations here, the facilities which the United States affords us for the training of some of our personnel. For example, we are particularly interested in looking into the possibility of sending some Costa Ricans to the navy school. As you know, Costa Rica has adopted a policy on international maritime law in relation to the use of fishing resources which has led us to establish a coast guard service, which we want to make as professional as possible. We have turned to a large number of friendly countries seeking technical advice for this kind of activity, which is new to Costa Ricans. We have an offer from Ecuador, for example, and are very interested in looking into the possibility of sending some Costa Ricans to the Canal Zone.

Actually, the visit is a courtesy visit to reciprocate General MaCauliffe and his wife's visit in September to Costa Rica.

[Question] Mr Minister, U.S. television networks and the news agencies of several countries report that Costa Rica is a training area for the Sandinist army. What is the Costa Rican Government's stand in this regard?

[Answer] I will tell you about the latest development which occurred after I left Costa Rica. On Tuesday afternoon, an afternoon newspaper published reports of the existence of a very large Sandinist camp in northern Costa Rica. The president called the newsman who was responsible for the news and the newspaper's director, demanding proof of the existence of the camp. They said they knew where it was; the exact location. The president then asked them to accompany him that very night to the place to see if it existed or not. After some persuasion, because the newsmen were reluctant to go, they left San Jose at about 0130 in the morning by plane for Guanacaste. The president, three newsmen, and one or two more persons spent from 0400 to 1600 of the next day touring the area without finding anything. This obliged the newsmen who gave the report to retract it publicly.

By this I do not mean that there is not a large number of Sandinist Front sympathizers in Costa Rica, or that there are not some actively belligerent members of the Sandinist Front in Costa Rica. The government's policy has been that any person who is in our territory in possession of unauthorized arms, if he is a foreigner or a political refugee, is deported, mostly to Panama. And I want to take advantage of this opportunity to express my gratitude and recognition to the people and government of Panama for the solidarity which in all these difficult times they have shown the people and government of Costa Rica.

We are not willing to permit Costa Rica to be used as a base to attack Nicaragua, but we have 320 km of common border, 320 km of difficult terrain.

There are a lot of mountains, totally uninhabited places, and it is impossible--materially impossible--to guarantee that some Nicaraguan patriots who want to change things in their country will not cross over into Nicaragua from Costa Rica.

Similar situations have existed before in the world. For 7 years the U.S. Government and its army tried to stop the infiltration of guerrillas on the Loatian border, and they were unable to do so. As far as I know, the illegal crossing of Mexicans into the United States has been impossible to stop. If the Nicaraguans, with their military resources, which are much greater that Costa Rica's, are not able to stop the illegal crossing from Costa Rica to Nicaragua, we can hardly be expected to be able to do so. But the government's policy is firm, clear and congruent with our international commitments. And the Costa Rican Government, despite the great sympathy felt by the Costa Rican people, will not collaborate with the guerrillas in any way.

[Question] Mr Minister, do you think there is an imminent, real possibility of a Central American war, with the crisis in Nicaragua these days?

[Answer] I consider this very improbable. The inter-American system has proved that it is flexible enough to avoid a confrontation of this kind. The solidarity of the Panamanian and Venezuelan governments, which has been unrestricted, unlimited, is a guarantee to us, a people who are accustomed to living without a permanent army, that we can count on the free people of America to guarantee the sovereign right of a nation that does not want to resort to arms to defend its integrity.

[Question] Mr Minister, what would happen to the stability of the Central American Isthmus if General Somoza's regime were to fall suddenly and the Sandinist army took power?

[Answer] Countries are like human beings: They have to learn, to educate themselves to live in democracy and liberty. [Nicaragua is] a nation which for over 46 years has lived under the absolute control of one family, without any kind of limitations, because even the few monarchs who still exist have have a constitutional and parliamentary limitations, and this has not existed in Nicaragua for the past 46 years. This absence of self-government, of putting into practice the principles of self-determination, permits one to foresee a difficult transitional situation in Nicaragua, no matter what happens. If one takes examples such as Spain, Portugal and the Dominican Republic, which for a long time had one-man, authoritarian and autocratic governments, one sees that it took them time. It took them time to get used to the new way of life in which human rights are respected, in which the individuality and the liberty of man are guaranteed.

We are aware that a change in Nicaragua will require a period of adjustment. It will require a period of accomodation, a period of education. Unfortunately, in Nicaragua political activity and leadership are exercised through guerrilla belligerence and not by the participation of citizens. But we think that the Nicaraguan people, who are a noble people, with the support of the free peoples of America, will be able to overcome any period of necessary adjustment which, unfortunately, will have to come.

If by "stability" you mean the peace of bayonets, it is possible that this stability will be somewhat affected. But when something is born it always comes with pain, constrictions, limitations, with some suffering. I think that the dawn of freedom in Central America will have to go through that period of pain and formation, but it will produce a more mature people, a more united people, a more human Central America.

COSTA RICA

GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE ENDORSES MEDIATION IN NICARAGUA

PA090023Y Paris AFP in Spanish 2353 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Text] San Jose, 8 Dec (AFP)--According to an official communique released here this afternoon by the Costa Rican Government, "the effort currently being made by the mediation commission, which is comprised of the United States, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic," constitutes at this point the "only positive solution" to the Nicaraguan conflict.

In the communique released this afternoon, the Foreign Ministry notes: "In connection with the mediation efforts currently underway in Managua, we feel that they constitute the only positive solution and we hope that these negotiations will find support."

This is the first official declaration by the San Jose government endorsing the mediation efforts connected with the neighboring country's conflict.

PRESIDENT CARAZO REPORTS ON ALLEGED INVASION FORCE

PA091714Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0100 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Speech by Costa Rican President Carazo on 8 December, place not given--presumably live]

[Text] Costa Ricans, good evening. We all know that during the past months we have confronted a difficult situation. Our government has tried by all possible means, in spite of its weakness and lack of military organization, to maintain all its international commitments. We have patrolled our territory and have guaranteed that our country will not be used to create an enormous organization to wage war on other countries. We have repeatedly stated, regarding our commitments to the OAS, that our responsibility lies in carefully patrolling our border and territory.

On 21 November, after many weeks of problems, we were saddened by the death of two Civil Guardsmen. Costa Ricans occasionally take up arms to make a living. These weapons are used to maintain peace and order in Costa Rica. This is why I have special consideration for the tasks of Civil Guardsmen. This is why I felt such sorrow that our community had to lose two of its sons in compliance with our international commitments.

We felt deep sorrow when we buried the sons of humble families in our community, and felt anguish to think that there were Costa Rican prisoners in Nicaragua. All this must lead us to understand the seriousness of the problems which confront us. During the past weeks we have tried to carry out a cleanup campaign to show that there are no strong movements in our country which could invade Nicaragua.

We have tried to achieve all our peaceful purposes and we have expelled many persons who have tried to organize small groups in Costa Rica. Suddenly the press, as if unaware of the seriousness of the existing situation, has allowed several persons, by means of radio, television and newspapers, to express their revolutionary attitude and their desire to turn Costa Rica into a springboard for the invasion of another country.

This has seriously jeopardized the national peace. On 5 December, LA PRENSA LIBRE said that 5,000 mercenaries, mostly foreigners, were poised in Costa Rica ready to invade Nicaragua.

Logically, this caused concern among the government and me in particular. The only way to solve this problem was to make a decision. I immediately asked Elisabeth Odio to interview the newspaper's staff and ask for proof since our responsibility was to take one of two steps: We either had to prove to the world that it was not true or find the places where the 5,000 soldiers were preparing to invade Nicaragua. If we did not act promptly, we ran the risk of military reprisals from our neighbor and this would have caused pain and grief among Costa Ricans.

Our responsibility is serious. We are not playing games when it is said that in this country there are 5,000 soldiers ready to invade a neighboring country. We could not pretend before the OAS, where our complaint is lodged, that the report had not been published. So we asked LA PRENSA to give us proof and LA PRENSA immediately brought us their proof. It consisted of newspaper clippings from other publications which had reports by persons linked to the Nicaraguan guerrillas. This was all the evidence LA PRENSA presented.

We had to clear up the matter immediately. Therefore, we proposed that the newsman go with government officials to those places where he reported the existence of military camps ready to invade Nicaragua. We also asked the newspaper director to accompany us. He refused to go. Costa Rica was in danger. We had to prove as soon as possible that this was not true and, if it were true, to arrest the persons in those camps.

I immediately said that, according to the powers vested in me by the constitution, I was ready to do whatever was necessary to save Costa Rica from any danger. Therefore, I also said that I would go to the border and I asked the newsman and high-ranking Civil Guard officials to accompany us to confirm the report that he had published in his newspaper.

The places concerned cover a wide area and it was up to the newsman who had reported the location of the camps to lead us. At 0215 that morning, as the country knows, we left for the border. We flew during the night and after sunrise visited the places which the newsman had mentioned. The result of the investigation is already known by Costa Rica. There were no traces of military camps at any of the places mentioned by the newsman. This is noted in the notarized document which the newsman himself signed. Costa Ricans knew we could confirm that 5,000 men were not in Guanacaste ready to invade Nicaragua. Therefore, the risk of reprisals from Nicaragua against our country immediately disappeared.

You must recall that Costa Rica has no relations with Nicaragua. We broke relations when two of our Civil Guardsmen were murdered. The Costa Ricans must recall that this administration, as is traditional in Costa Rica, has respected the thoughts and opinions of all persons and will undoubtedly continue to respect them through its constitutional term. But, gentlemen, I will do anything according to the constitution, laws, logic and commonsense to protect the lives of Costa Ricans.

I could have sent the newsman with someone else, but I preferred to go myself. I announced to the Costa Rican press that the investigation was going to be conducted by the constitutional president. We were going to investigate something affecting our national health. I did not want someone delivering messages. We had to personally assume the responsibility of having, along with the Civil Guard officials, a member of the national press to help us save Costa Rica from any danger. I assumed this responsibility personally. No one had to speak for me and I am glad I went. If it had been necessary that night to suspend national guarantees in order to make the newsman come with us--the newsman who reported the existence of armed camps in our country thereby increasing the danger of war--I would have suspended the guarantees. I do not want anyone to tell me that I did not act when the time came to do so. The responsibility is mine. You placed me here to watch over Costa Rica and I am doing that.

My presence guaranteed the best treatment and attention. The newsman went with me, under the same conditions, traveling broad the same aircraft, eating the same food, suffering the same hardships and enjoying the same facilities.

He could not take us to any of the places where he had said that guerrilla camps existed, ready to invade the country. He signed a document which clearly states that there were no such camps and that the danger is past. Meanwhile, I assure Costa Ricans that whenever the situation arises I shall act with the required determination to insure that all Costa Ricans can feel that the government is watching over the safety of all. Good night.

CLEANUP OPERATIONS ALONG NICARAGUAN BORDER RESUME

PA091726Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0030 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Cleanup operations along the Costa Rican-Nicaraguan border will be resumed tomorrow. There will be a more thorough investigation of the alleged Sandinist groups. These statements were made by the interior minister although he did not define the exact number of troops involved. He said, however, that an appropriate number of men needed for such an operation would participate.

The security high command even considered it necessary to include the use of the two helicopters loaned by the Panamanian Government.

At the beginning, the public force will pay particular attention to the regions directly on the border, from (?El Telon) to the Panamerican Highway and Penas Blancas and along the other side up to the Guanacaste region.

The security officials said that, if necessary, they will go to the Atlantic side although the operation will be more difficult there because of the terrain. The public force will begin the operation tomorrow using all necessary personnel.

The interior minister said this afternoon that the cleanup operation is being resumed to confirm, before the country and the press, Costa Rica's neutral attitude toward events in Nicaragua, where the National Guard and the Sandinist National Liberation Front have clashed.

President Rodrigo Carazo has expressed his desire that the LA PRENSA LIBRE reporter, who published a report on the alleged presence of 5,000 Sandinists training in Guanacaste, participate in the operations.

Operation To Cost Nearly $1 Million

PA102226Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2103 GMT 10 Dec 78 PA

[Text] San Jose, 10 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--It was learned in this capital today that the "cleanup operation," through which Costa Rica will try to locate and expel all Sandinists who are in its northern region, will cost the government approximately $1 million.

The government decided to resume the operation after it was stated that mercenaries were present in Guanacaste, a province on the border with Nicaragua. The mercenaries were said to be only awaiting the order to attack the forces of Gen Anastasio Somoza Debayle.

Military equipment was immediately sent to the area in order to facilitate the task of the Civil Guards who are stationed there and who will be devoted solely to the cleanup operation.

The equipment includes two helicopters which were acquired recently from Panama. They are being used to carry out frequent air inspections. Several fuel trucks were sent from Guanacaste today in order to supply the helicopters.

The government had slowed down the operation following the killing of two Costa Rican guards in a confrontation with the Nicaraguan National Guard which occurred on their common border on 21 November. Over the first 2 months, the cleanup operation enabled the government to capture and later expel approximately 400 guerrillas.

FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS WITH PEREZ, ROYO, TORRIJOS

PA091746Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0037 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] San Jose, 8 Dec (AFP)--It was announced here that Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rafael Calderon will meet tonight with Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez. Foreign Minister Calderon met in Panama last night with President Aristides Royo and Gen Omar Torrijos. The object of the foreign minister's visits is to consolidate efforts for the forthcoming OAS meetings in Washington in order to establish effective coordination for future OAS strategy. It was learned that Calderon will invite Perez to pay an official visit to Costa Rica from 12 to 14 January. Perez lived in exile in Costa Rica from 1951 to 1959.

FSLN DENIES FAO'S REPRESENTATIVE ROLE IN NEGOTIATIONS

PA101957Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1918 GMT 10 Dec 78 PA

[Text] San Jose, 10 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--The Sandinist National Liberation Front [FSLN] has circulated a press communique in this capital stating that the Nicaraguan Broad Opposition Front [FAO] does not represent them. Their reaction was triggered by U.S. President Jimmy Carter's statements noting that the FAO represented the guerrillas in the negotiations with the Nicaraguan Government.

The President of the United States does not know Nicaraguan reality, the communique points out. It also notes that President Somoza's overthrow can be achieved only through armed revolution.

The Sandinist Front has called a news conference tomorrow, Monday, at a still unspecified location. Assurances have been given that the FSLN will explain its position during the news conference on the negotiations between the Nicaraguan Government and the opposition and regarding the armed struggle underway in that country.

EL SALVADOR

FARN ISSUES NEW DEMANDS IN WAKE OF KIDNAPINGS

RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS DEMANDED

PA081654Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0106 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 7 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--It was disclosed here Thursday night that the clandestine Armed Forces of National Resistance [FARN] is demanding the release of a large number of political prisoners in exchange for the lives of three kidnaped foreign executives.

FARN first captured Fritz Schuiteman, the Netherlands manager of Phillips of El Salvador, for whose release it demanded the publication of a leftist manifesto in 32 countries, which has already been done, and $1 million. Now comes the demand for the release of Salvadoran political prisoners. The government says it is not holding them and government spokesmen say they have been placed before civil courts where they are being tried.

FARN is also holding Scottish executive Ian Massie and Michael Chatterton, an Englishman. They are the manager and assistant manager, respectively, of the Bank of London and South America branch in San Salvador.

Added to the kidnaping of Massie and Chatterton was today's kidnaping of Japanese executive Takakazu Suzuki of the Insica textile firm, owned jointly by Japanese and Salvadorans.

Asks for Negotiating Commission

PA100150Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1807 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 9 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--It was learned in diplomatic circles today, Saturday, that the clandestine Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN) has demanded that a commission be formed to negotiate the exchange of the two abducted British executives for a large number of political prisoners. According to the sources, the Salvadoran Government has already announced that it will not negotiate with illegal groups. It has also denied having any political prisoners, affirming that those prisoners have been turned over to the corresponding civil courts in accordance with the law on the guarantee and defense of public order.

In view of this, the FARN has notified the British Embassy in El Salvador that it wants a negotiating group to be organized. The group should include San Salvador Archbishop Msgr Oscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdamez, a diplomat and another honorable person.

The FARN is holding Scotsman Ian Massie and English citizen Michael Chatterton, manager and assistant manager, respectively, of the Bank of London and South America branch in El Salvador. The two men were kidnaped on 30 November at the Metropolitan Cathedral's east parking lot.

The group is also holding Dutch executive Fritz Schuiteman hostage at an undisclosed location. It is expected that Schuiteman will be released at any moment since the Phillips Company for which he works has already met all of the extremists' demands.

CATHOLIC CHURCH ACCUSES REGIME OF ASSASSINATIONS

PA081220Y Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Text] The Catholic Church has accused the Salvadoran regime of assassinating the only survivor of an alleged clash between guerrillas and troops of that Central American country. According to a Catholic Church communique released in the Costa Rican capital, Jose Isidro Portillo Paz survived the alleged clash. There is documented evidence of this as well as of the fact that he was killed at a Salvadoran police headquarters.

Meanwhile, several Salvadoran exiles have affirmed in San Jose that the action carried out last 28 November was arranged by the government in order to conceal the assassination of four other persons, including Priest Ernesto Barrera (Motto).

GUATEMALA

GOVERNMENT REJECTS UN RESOLUTION ON BELIZE

PA081215Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0055 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Guatemala, 7 Dec (AFP)--The Guatemalan Government today rejected a resolution approved by the fourth UN commission on the future of Belize. The fourth UN commission urged "all states to respect the right of the people of Belize to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity." A government communique released this afternoon said that Guatemala "reaffirms its legitimate rights over Belize."

The government added that it "solemnly pledges to the people of Guatemala its irreversible decision to always respect the country's constitution, which declares that Belize is part of Guatemala." It also reaffirmed that Guatemala is prepared to ignore the United Nations resolutions and to continue the process of negotiations with Great Britain concerning this territory, which is now under British control.

HONDURAS

POLICARPO PAZ ON PRIVATE VISIT TO U.S.

PA081601Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1450 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 8 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--It has been unofficially learned here today that Gen Policarpo Paz Garcia, president of the Honduran military junta, left for Miami yesterday on a pleasure trip. Gen Paz Garcia had asked the armed forces Superior Council, a body of military and political power, to grant him permission to leave the country for a few days. The council granted him permission. During his absence for an unspecified number of days, Lt Col Amilcar Zelaya Rodriguez will be in charge of the presidency of the junta.

The two other members of the triumvirate, Lieutenant Colonels Domingo Alvarez and Amilcar Zelaya, last night watched youth teams from Canada, the United States, Honduras and Trinidad play for the fourth youth soccer championship of North and Central America and the Caribbean at the national stadium of Tegucigalpa.

Gen Paz Garcia's wife, Carlota de Paz Garcia, has been in Miami for the past few days buying toys that the National Social Welfare Board, which she heads, will give to the poor children.

This is the first time that Gen Paz Garcia has left the country since he became President of the military government junta.

AMILCAR ZELAYA TEMPORARILY IN COMMAND OF PRESIDENCY

PA092116Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 2050 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 9 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--The Honduran military triumvirate has been temporarily reduced to a single member due to the unexpected trip that its president, Gen Policarpo Paz Garcia, made yesterday to Miami and the departure for Guatemala today of another of its members, Lt Col Domingo Alvarez Cruz.

The nation's supreme command has thus been left in the hands of Lt Col Amilcar Zelaya Rodriguez, who was also away from the capital today, Saturday, for a few hours on a special mission in the country's Southern zone.

After Paz Garcia's departure for the United States, Zelaya Rodriguez, who is also the chief of the public security force, assumed the presidency of the military junta.

Air Force Commander General Alvarez Cruz left for the Guatemalan capital at the invitation of that country's air force.

The present government junta seized power on 7 August after overthrowing Gen Juan Alberto Melgar Castro, who has been having serious differences with the military chiefs. This is the first time that the members of the triumvirate have traveled abroad since they seized power.

C. AMERICAN ARMIES ALLEGED PLAN TO AID SOMOZA DENIED

PA081635Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2324 GMT 7 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 7 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--Military sources denied here today that an alleged meeting of Central American armies is taking place in Panama. Persistent rumors spread by Central American news media had indicated that the Guatemalan, Salvadoran and Honduran armies "were meeting in Panama to discuss a plan to aid the Nicaraguan National Guard in the event of a possible Sandinist offensive."

Honduran officers who asked not to be identified told ACAN-EFE that some commanders of infantry battalions are outside the country but they are undergoing higher studies in order to be eligible for promotion to their next rank. The same source added that other officers who are in Panama are taking part in "actions appropriate to their military role" in that country.

It was also indicated that "there is interest in having Honduras become involved in Nicaragua's domestic conflict but that the Honduran Army's neutrality in that problem has been accounced at all levels and will remain unchanged."

Statements by armed forces officers and members of the Honduran military junta reiterated that "Honduran territory will not be used as a springboard to invade friendly countries or as a hunting ground for neighboring armies."

NICARAGUA

SOMOZA DISCUSSES AMNESTY, PLEBISCITE AT PRESS CONFERENCE

PA080435Y Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 2355 GMT 7 Dec 78 PA

[Question and answer period of press conference held by Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza in Managua on 7 December 1978 following opening remarks by Somoza--recorded]

[Text] [Question] Mr President, Alfonso Chardi of UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL. I want to ask you if the amnesty would also include members of the Sandinist National Liberation Front [FSLN] with weapons or must they lay down their arms before returning to Nicaragua? Also, there have been reports of confrontations in the northern part of the country, in Esteli and Leon. I want to know if you have any comments on this.

[Answer] The amnesty covers all Nicaraguans who for one reason or another have committed political or related crimes. This includes a man from the FSLN with a rifle or a bomb or a National Guardsman who has committed abuses in the performance of his duties. Therefore, it is let bygones be bygones. The amnesty covers the period from the last amnesty, in 1965 I believe, to the day on which the amnesty is published in the government GAZETTE, which will be in some 20 or 30 days.

[Question] Could you give us some more details on the amnesty for the political prisoners you have just mentioned? How will this plan operate?

[Answer] My administration, acting through the Government Ministry, will present an amnesty bill to Congress and the chambers will discuss it. It will then pass to the Senate and then, I understand, it will pass to a joint session, from where it will go to the executive. There, I sign it or amend it. If I sign it just as I receive it from Congress, it is published immediately and from that moment on all those who have committed political crimes will be as if they had not committed them.

[Question] How long will this procedure take?

[Answer] From 20 to 30 days.

[Question] Chinandega newsman Luis Arroli Arrames, asking the following questions, one of which is political, about the present situation existing in Nicaragua. First, does it mean that starting from today the hundreds of political prisoners in our country will be released before those 30 days required to act on the law have passed? Second, if the international mediation commission does not accomplish anything politically with the Broad Opposition Front [FAO] and the Nationalist Liberal Party [PLN] and the commission leaves, what would the existing situation be in the country?

[Answer] In reply to your questions, those in custody will have to wait until the amnesty has been legislated. Once it has been published in the GAZETTE, they will all be released and the situation in Nicaragua will return to normal.

The [answer to the] second question is that if the FAO [as heard] does not reach an agreement, then the talks are broken off, the commission leaves and the situation continues. If following the amnesty the FAO wants to again return to a situation where the citizens are involved in violence and there is more bloodshed, this is their responsibility.

[Question] Mr President, [words indistinct] I would like to salute you and to congratulate you for having a noble cabinet and a loyal National Guard. My question is: I have made an analysis--I do not know if I am wrong or not--but you are not really the person they want to get rid of. I believe it is the army they want to get rid of. Therefore, you are like a ripe apple; you are the person ruling the country and they want to get you out of the way in order to continue the fight with the army. Do you think this could be so?

[Answer] Well, usually those opposed to a political system begin first by attacking the head of the regime and then attack everything that supports the regime. I am in agreement with you, Mr Montalban.

[Question] Mr President, a meeting was held yesterday at the bank superintendency with the Leon businessmen presumably affected by the September events. They said the insurers will not pay damages because the underwriters said they will not pay because this was a war situation and not just an attack.

Since the military courts are in session in various departments, including Leon, they are awaiting a decision from these courts. Meanwhile, what has your government said? Were the September events an attack or have you another opinion? Excuse me, here is bank superintendent Mr Humberto Becerra, who was present at yesterday's meeting. It is important that the Leon and Chinandega businessmen hear your [Somoza's] voice.

[Answer] We, according to the traditional Nicaraguan definition, have described the events which took place in seven municipalities as an attack.

[Question] How many political prisoners do you believe there are in Nicaragua today?

[Answer] No more than 200.

[Question] A report has been published about an arms merchant in Miami who has been accused of selling weapons to Nicaragua. Could you comment on this?

[Answer] Only what the newspapers say. Officially, I do not know of any business dealings with this gentleman.

[Question] There is a report from Esteli that there was a National Guard action this morning and last night against some Sandinist camps in the mountains. Could you tell us anything?

[Answer] Yes, there are camps which the subversive groups have tried to establish and we are carrying out an operation to locate them.

[Question] Are they very big, very extensive?

[Answer] No, no.

[Question] Thank you.

[Question] What is your opinion of the mediation commission's proposal that the plebiscite be limited to a decision regarding your retention of power, without a second vote on a constituent assembly?

[Answer] That is one of the things which we have to discuss with the FAO because the underlying fact is that if I should say that I will allow a vote as to whether I will remain or leave, I would have implicitly presented my resignation. On the other hand, If I say do I remain or do we go to a constituent assembly, I would be giving the people the right to legally determine the nation's destiny.

[Question] Do you believe that the international situation has improved, that the countries which have been opposing us have changed their attitude toward our government?

[Answer] No.

[Question] Mr President, regarding the decree on the suspension of constitutional guarantees, can you tell me when it will go into effect and also when the radio and television code will be replaced?

[Answer] The decree canceling the state of siege enters into effect immediately. The only thing to be met is the legal requirement of having it read as a public edict. This will be done in the morning. I understand that the radio and television law needs only a pronouncement by the congressional committee.

[Question] Could you summarize the contents of that proposed radio and television law for us?

[Answer] No, because I read it about 3 months ago when I was at Montelimar and the radio broacasters visited me to ask for the amendment or replacement. Therefore, I do not have its contents in mind right now.

[Question] According to the call for the plebiscite, Mr President, by 3 January all parties which will take part have to be registered.

[Answer] You are confused. You are speaking of the PLN, the plebiscite of the PLN, and those are factions, not parties.

[Question] Factions?

[Answer] Yes.

[Question] What if it is not possible to have them registered by 3 January?

[Answer] Well, the national legal board of the PLN is studying what can be done regarding the Liberal plebiscite since we plan to have a national plebiscite. We are trying to see if we can make arrangements for the Liberal plebiscite to take place at another time or perhaps at the same time as the national plebiscite.

[Question] The Costa Ricans have boasted that they have more teachers than soldiers, but a few days ago the (?interior) minister of Costa Rica told UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL that his government had placed 6,000 men on alert. What do you think of this statement?

[Answer] Well, I have never been fooled by the Costa Ricans because we have studied their budget and we know how many men they have for internal and public security. The fact that they have said that there are 6,000 men indicates that the Costa Ricans have a Civil Guard in which some have been trained as national guardsmen, sent to schools abroad and can be described as soldiers.

[Question] Mr President, when will the restrictions on the sale of dollars be lifted?

[Answer] Well, I would like to lift them tomorrow, but we cannot do so because we are being attacked by the United States to the extent that it has not wished to cooperate with us in settling affairs at the International Monetary Fund.

[Question] Mr President, we believe that the springboard [trampolin] between Costa Rica and Nicaragua has been neutralized. Do you share this belief?

[Answer] I believe so, because all the threats of invasions and offensives have come to nothing. Therefore, I felt that it was not fair for us to keep the Nicaraguan people under a state of martial law based on unreal circumstances. That is why I decided to accede to the request of the commission by reestablishing full guarantees to all the people of Nicaragua.

[Question] Would you agree to be a candidate in the 1981 elections?

[Answer] If the constitution permitted it, yes, but since it does not permit it, no.

[Question] Who will comprise the team that will revoke the present radio and television code?

[Answer] It will be the Liberal and Conservative deputies of the Congress and the Senate.

[Question] What guarantees can you give us that we will have a Christmas without violence from the Sandinist Front, which has announced a new attack?

[Answer] Well, your question is one of the most interesting ones. The only way in which I can guarantee to the Nicaraguans and the next leader who is here that there will be no violence from the Sandinist Front is for all Nicaraguans who believe in peace, in democratic governments, in democracy to turn their backs on that subversion being carried out by a minority group which believes that solutions are achieved through war. And this is the focus of my government's entire attitude--to talk with all those forces which oppose the government and which are democratic in order to isolate the members of the front who, as always, ever since they emerged, have never taken the citizens into account in assuming their positions. On the contrary, they have been the executioners, killing senators, poor people, defenseless people, as the history of their bank robberies and other actions show. For this reason, I am interested in having those who believe in democratic government join together to defend our democratic ideals against the subversion of the Sandinist Front, which seeks by force to dismantle the republican state which we have here in Nicaragua and which has brought us so many benefits in the past.

[Question] I believe that the question from Montalban was whether your authority as chief of the National Guard, supreme chief of the armed forces, could be used to somehow press or urge the courts of the various departments to make a ruling so that the corresponding claims could begin to be submitted to the insurance companies by the businesses which were damaged in the September attack. Could you somehow press the courts to expedite their rulings?

[Answer] I cannot ask the courts to hasten their rulings because I do not have that authority. The courts are independent. However, I do wish to say that from this moment on, the military courts are going to transfer the files to the corresponding judges so that the civil courts will be the ones to make a ruling.

[Question] Mr President, the FAO's idea of having the black code revoked, which was presented to the mediation commission, seems to be bearing fruit. You say here that a bill will be presented, a bill which was drafted 3 months ago. I believe that we newsmen, who are the spokesmen for the feelings of the community; the FAO, which represents a sector of the political force in Nicaragua; and the PLN, which also has strength and power, should be familiarized with the bill in order to form a definite opinion regarding what the three sectors think about it, before it is sent to the chambers, not just the opinion of the Liberal party, which could replace the black code with a dark code [codigo obscuro]. Why then do you not release the radio and television code for public debate so that it could be defined? [sentence as heard]

[Answer] It has been open to public debate for the past 3 months.

[Question] But not functionally, Mr President, because simply ...

[Somoza interrupts] Perhaps because no attention has been paid to your desires. But I have not seen or heard you making proposals.

[Question] Mr President, as you know, proposed amendments have been presented to the Congress. The appointed commissions have never met and have never invited anyone. They have been asleep. Therefore...

[Somoza interrupts] Well then, let us begin to judge now.

[Question] Then we will have the public debate that the people want on the code?

[Answer] Yes, sir.

[Question] Thank you very much.

[Answer] That is why use was made of... [does not complete sentence] Please listen to me. That is why the word replace was used. It means that the old order will be replaced with a new one. Therefore, there is open debate on the radio and television code. There are Conservative deputies who can present the ideas of the Conservatives in Congress and the commission will take them into account. And we have some Liberals who are Socialists and who can also express the ideas of the Socialist Liberals. Therefore, there is no problem.

Gentlemen, I want to wish you a happy evening on this 7 December and I hope that we will celebrate it with joy because the behavior of Nicaragua in general has been favorable and has won full guarantees for all Nicaraguans. Thank you very much.

MILITARY COURT RELEASES 11 PRISONERS 9 DECEMBER

PA1001127 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0030 GMT 10 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Managua, 9 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--What could be described as the first result of the announced amnesty concerning political or related crimes occurred today, Saturday, when the military court in Managua released 11 prisoners. Forty-three other prisoners who are being held for alleged participation in subversive acts will be arraigned before civil courts, applying the principle that the benefit of the doubt goes to the defendant.

The members of the court, which ceased functioning when the state of siege and the martial law were lifted on 7 December, decided to release the 11 opponents of the Somoza regime.

The court was composed of Col Ernesto Galeno, Maj Hugo Torres and Maj Constantino Mendieta as members and Maj Oscar Soto Gonzalez as the prosecutor.

The court was created on 6 October in the wake of violence in several Nicaraguan cities. The court investigated 71 persons, 45 of whom were indicted for crimes against law and order and national security.

The first to be released were Alfredo Cesar Aguirre, former manager of the country's largest sugar mill located in Chichigalpa in the western part of the country, and Alejandro Carrion McDonough. The latter is the brother of Javier Carrion McDonough, a member of the Sandinist National Liberation Front who participated in the attack on the home of former Minister Jose Maria Castillo in December 1974 during a party in honor of U.S. Ambassador Turner Sheldon. In the attack, a terrorist group took several cabinet ministers, diplomats and businessmen hostage.

The guerrilla was captured by military authorities and was later freed as a result of an attack by a Sandinist commando.

FAO INSISTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF MINIMUM DEMANDS

PA090120Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0100 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Managua--The Broad Opposition Front, FAO, insisted today, Friday, that President Anastasio Somoza's government must implement, as soon as possible, the minimum demands made by the FAO in order to begin direct talks between the opposition and the party in power. This is the consensus reached following a prolonged session held by the FAO which started Thursday morning and which was still underway in this capital in the afternoon in the offices of the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement, MDN.

The FAO expressed satisfaction over the immediate suspension of the state of siege and the lifting of the martial law, one of the minimum demands made by the opposition.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, OPPOSITION LEADERS MEET 8 DECEMBER

PA091936Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1730 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Managua--For the first time this year specific talks were held yesterday afternoon between opposition leaders and Somozist representatives in order to implement the bill on amnesty for political prisoners as soon as possible. It was reported by well-informed political circles today that yesterday's meeting was attended by members of the Broad Opposition Front's [FAO] political commission, the opposition's legal advisers and Liberal leaders Julio Quintana, the Nicaraguan foreign minister, and Alceo Tablada, political secretary of the ruling party and senator of the republic.

It was reported that the specific talks concluded that President Somoza's government had drawn up the amnesty bill and that it will be sent to the National Congress within the next few hours. The FAO asked yesterday that the approval of the amnesty bill not be delayed any longer and that it be implemented within 2 or 3 days. Regarding the opposition's demand to repeal the Nicaraguan radio and television code, the FAO demands that it be annulled before the end of the year.

Further on Meeting

PA092151Y Paris AFP in English 2143 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Managua, 9 Dec (AFP)--Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza has made new concessions to the opposition in an effort to resolve the country's political crisis, it was announced here today.

(United States President Jimmy Carter earlier revealed in Memphis, Tennessee, that talks would [word indistinct] immediately to set up a referendum on the composition of Nicaragua's next government.)

The agreements [words indistinct] in talks between President Somoza's Nationalist Liberal Party and the primarily Sandinist Broad Opposition Front in the Guatemalan Embassy here, officials said.

A major concession was moving forward to Wednesday the parliamentary debate on an amnesty bill for political prisoners. It was also agreed to set up a joint committee to decide which political prisoners would be freed outright and those to be amnestied. Sandinist leaders are among the prisoners. Negotiations were continuing today for a peace agreement and for a new code governing radio and television news.

FAO SPOKESMAN DENIES CARTER REMARKS ON TALKS

PA100432Y Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 0400 GMT 10 Dec 78 PA

[Text] President Carter surprised the world today with two announcements that are not completely true. He said, for instance, that the Broad Opposition Front [FAO] had already engaged in talks with General Somoza. Nonetheless, official FAO spokesman Javier Zavala has denied this statement and has given the following explanation: [Begin Zavala recording] No, direct negotiations with the Liberal Party have not begun in any way. The FAO feels that it cannot remain passive [as heard] in the face of a simple promise by General Somoza that he will grant an amnesty and reform the black code. The FAO remains firm in its stand that it will not accept [remainder of item indistinct].

FAO LEADER CAUTIONS AGAINST SOMOZA'S 'PROMISES'

PA081759Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1521 GMT 8 Dec 78 PA

[Station interview with Broad Opposition Front leader Alfonso Robelo in Managua, Nicaragua; date not given--recorded]

[Excerpt] [Robelo] I would like to note that if these gains--amnesty, which is most important, the full exercise of constitutional guarantees, the pardon and the repeal of the black code--are obtained or rather wrested from Somoza, the victory would belong solely to the Nicaraguan people who, through the FAO, pressured Somoza into yielding. This is very clear. The second important thing is that in the past, Somoza has made promises that he has not kept and one should not be carried away by the enthusiasm of promises. One should remain vigilant and cautious to see if Somoza keeps them. Have I explained myself?

[Question] Of course.

[Answer] Moreover, it is very important for all to see that in the same news conference Somoza said several things, a fact that already shows he is not acting in good faith. An amnesty decree can be processed through the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate and then ratified by President Somoza himself. The procedure, if he wants to do it quickly, should take no more than 2 or 3 days. When he was asked how long it would take, he said approximately 20 or 30 days. So what is happening is an effort to slow down and confuse things to see what will occur and thereby gain time. This has really become a sham exercise for the Nicaraguan people who are already used to such things. So we hold to our same position. We are vigilant and are trying, through all civil means and without giving up, to seek a true solution to the Nicaraguan problem. The only true solution will come when Somoza leaves and Nicaraguans can start to straighten the course of this ship.

RODOLFO ROBELO RESIGNS FROM FAO POLITICAL COMMITTEE

PA092222Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1900 GMT 9 Dec 78 PA

[Text] Managua, 9 Dec (ACAN-EFE)--The Broad Opposition Front (FAO) lost another of its leaders today, Saturday. Rodolfo Robelo Herrera has resigned from his post in that organization, which is opposed to the regime of Gen Anastasio Somoza. Robelo had been a member of the FAO political committee until today. He has held talks with the three international mediators sent to Nicaragua by the OAS.

According to political circles, Robelo Herrera decided to give up the functions that the FAO had assigned him because he does not agree with the position assumed by that organization lately.

Political groups, important persons and labor unions have broken with the FAO, accusing the opposition coalition of yielding too much to the government.

Robelo's resignation comes at the very moment when the front has held its first talks with representatives of Somozism. These talks are aimed only at discussing the implementation of the amnesty decree for Nicaraguan political prisoners.

Robelo Herrera, who is a member of the Independent Liberal Party (PLI), had been occupying the post left vacant as a result of the resignation of Sergio Ramirez, one of the members of the opposition group known as "the 12."

The PLI has been firmly opposed to the talks between the FAO and the international mediation commission, considering that the mediation is a form of intervention by Yankee imperialism.

The other members of the FAO political committee are Alfonso Robelo Callejas and Rafael Cordova Rivas.

Meanwhile, the permanent committee of the PLI has urged the FAO to rectify the policy it has assumed lately under pressure from the international mediation commission and to readopt the position of calling for a government of national unity without falling into discredited pacts and without betraying the Nicaraguan people.

Text of Resignation

PA101708Y Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 0400 GMT 10 Dec 78 PA

[Letter of resignation by Dr Rodolfo Robelo to Javier Zabala, Broad Opposition Front (FAO) coordinator, date and place not given--read by announcer]

[Text] Dear engineer: Since the FAO plenum has entrusted the FAO political committee with carrying out work which completely contradicts the position assumed and maintained by the Independent Liberal Party, a position which has been reiterated by its representatives and spokesmen and which I share as a member and national [word indistinct] of it, and also because the assigned work contradicts my personal convictions and views regarding the Nicaraguan political process and its current development by the FAO, I am immediately obligated to submit, through you to the FAO plenum, my resignation from the high office which I have filled selflessly and patriotically as a member of the political committee.

I beg you to convey to the FAO plenum, along with my resignation, my appreciation and that of my party for the confidence placed in me by choosing me as a member of important FAO body.

I remain with due consideration and appreciation, very truly yours,

[Signed] Rodolfo Robelo Herrera

GROUP OF 12 MEMBER ASSESSES PRESENT SITUATION

PY091304Y Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 7 Dec 78 p 20 PY

[Exclusive report by Paulo Adario]

[Text] Mexico City--The Group of 12, the only political force which openly supports the Sandinist National Liberation Front [FSLN], will ask the Broad Opposition Front (FAO) to discontinue the present negotiations and the international mediating commission to definitely leave the country.

Carlos Gutierrez, a member of the Group of 12 who lives here in Mexico City, disclosed to O GLOBO the contents of a document to be released soon by this group. Gutierrez said: "The FAO members are naive in agreeing to negotiate a peaceful alternative to prevent a crisis. Somoza is fooling everyone, especially the Americans, because he will agree to leave power only to run again in the 1981 presidential election."

[Question] What does the Group of 12 think of the proposal made by the mediating commission?

[Answer] It is immoral to speak of a plebiscite in Nicaragua. The FAO itself has already stated that a plebiscite would be absurd and that the Nicaraguan people have already conveyed their decision, both in October 1977 and in February and September this year, not with their votes but with their blood.

[Question] Would an election supervised by the OAS enable the people to freely express their will?

[Answer] We have had a long history of "supervised" elections and we are tired of it. We could just look back to the time of Augusto Sandino, when elections were supervised by the State Department, to confirm that fraud has always existed. The very fact that the OAS is willing to accept a plebiscite as an alternative shows that it is overlooking its own report on violations of human rights. This is so pathetic.

[Question] Anyone going to Nicaragua today can see that there are only two groups with political-military support: The pro-Somoza structure and the Sandinista Front. Whom, then, does the FAO represent?

[Answer] The FAO was and continues to be a tactical alliance. Originally the FAO consisted of 15 groups--some of which withdrew during the negotiations--including traditional political parties, unions, and those sectors which had no intention of joining any party because they were not identified with any of them. Had everyone behaved with loyalty and honesty, the system would have worked perfectly because it would have encompassed the various social and political sectors of Nicaragua. But within the FAO there are traditional politicians such as Ramiro Sacassa, a cousin of "Tachito" [Somoza] and his former minister, who joined the opposition keeping in mind his personal ambitions because he is well aware that his relatives will not give him the chance to become president.

[Question] In your opinion, what are Somoza's intentions?

[Answer] He is trying to gain time until 1980 when the United States will be preoccupied with its own presidential election and will no longer exert pressure on Nicaragua. According to Somoza's proposal, FAO members and representatives of Somoza's party will meet for 3 months to arrange a plebiscite which would be held 6 months after the completion of the negotiations between the two parties. [paragraph continues]

If Somoza loses, he would have to relinquish power to a constituent assembly (which would be controlled by his party) which would then elect a provisional president, who in turn would have to call general elections in 6 months. Since all this would take a minimum of 6 months and since the provisional president could not be a relative of Somoza, he would again be elegible to run for president.

[Question] Couldn't the FAO negotiations with Somoza cause the Sandinista Front to lose support from its international supporters, such as the social democracy?

[Answer] I don't think so. There are two real forces in Nicaragua: The Sandinista Front and the National Guard. Although the FAO has a function, it is the people who will have to make a decision. Whenever the FSLN attacked, the people have always supported it. What attitude will the Nicaraguan people adopt in the face of another Sandinist offensive? That will be the true plebiscite. The FSLN has been fighting for 18 years under adverse conditions. Earlier, there were only two or three cells, and today the FSLN can seize six important cities. Furthermore, the FSLN has obtained worldwide approval and its organization is an indestructable political and military reality. The United States is naturally not interested in seeing the FSLN in government. The FSLN's official spokesman, Father Ernesto Cardenal, has already stated, however, that the FSLN does not want to participate in the government. For this reason, the FSLN has called us--the Group of 12--to organize a pluralist type, provisional government.

[Question] The Sandinists have announced an offensive time and again. Why?

[Answer] The FSLN in October resumed the offensive which had been temporarily interrupted. National Guardsmen are quite uneasy and confined to quarters. Since soldiers can no longer go home, they do not know about their relatives. Meanwhile, pro-Somoza leaders have been sending their families to Miami. How effectively and for how long could these soldiers fight?

[Question] Do you believe the next offensive could be successful, considering the strength of the National Guard?

[Answer] Could we state that Somoza and the National Guard obtained a military victory in September? How could we state this since to recover the occupied cities they had to turn these cities into rubble and their actions were condemned by the world?

It is important to realize that the FSLN is a political-military organization. It is not possible to separate these two aspects. Since the struggle is mainly of a political nature, the military aspect is of secondary importance, although we have become aware of the need to engage in military actions to change political situations.

Compared to the possible military victory he may have obtained, Somoza suffered a major political defeat, because without the September offensive, there could not be a December or a January offensive.

CASTRO MEETS WITH EXILE REPRESENTATIVES ON PRISONERS

FL091721Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1703 GMT 9 Dec 78 FL

[Text] From 1500 (2000 GMT) yesterday until the early morning hours today the second meeting between the large commission of representative persons of the Cuban community abroad and the delegation of Cuban officials headed by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro occurred. The meeting was to formalize the agreements which had been reached at the first meeting which was held on 20 and 21 November on the points discussed by Comrade Fidel at the press conference held on 21 November. At the end of the second meeting Fidel Castro, president of the Council of State, held a press conference with national and international reporters which will be published tomorrow, Sunday. The official note on the meeting with the representatives of the Cuban community abroad will be disseminated by the national news agency and it will be published tomorrow by the national press.

Holds Press Conference

FL100053Y Havana Domestic Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 10 Dec 78 FL

[Press conference held by President Fidel Castro at the conclusion of the meeting with representatives of the Cuban community abroad "in the early morning hours" on 9 December, place not given--recorded]

[Text] [Marta Solis, Mexican SIEMPRE magazine] May I talk since no one has requested the floor?

[Castro] No one gives you the floor. You always take the floor.

[Solis] In the previous meeting you said that you recognized that [word indistinct]. This time more guests have come. What is the reason for this and what has happened this time?

[Castro] There were people who expressed a desire to come last time but had various difficulties in coming. There were people who afterwards expressed their desire to participate and other people we invited to participate in the second meeting because there were no rules and it seemed to us that an expansion would improve the occasion, according to the dialectical principle that quantity contributes to quality. So, there were more people. We would have liked to have enough people to fill the Karl Marx theater. And if we had invited all those who would have wanted to come, we would have filled the Karl Marx theater. And this was not a practical thing. It was not possible. We do not have that many transportation facilities. So we wanted to have as many representative figures as possible. And that is what has happened. There is the committee of 75. That is the name because they were the first 75 who were here. About 70 again participated out of the first 75. There were five persons who could not come. But 70 others came for them. All together there were 140. More or less the same number of countries at the United Nations, maybe a little less.

[Solis] The second part of my question: What has happened here today?

[Castro] What happened was that the agreements that we had reached in principle the first time were formalized and they were improved. And a record of the meeting and of the results was made also. Are you the director among the journalists, or what?

[Guillermo Urbizu] I have a question....[interrupted by Castro]

[Castro] You are Pimentel. Who are you?

[Urbizu] No.

[Castro] No? You are not Pimentel. Who are you?

[Urbizu] Guillermo Urbizu.

[Castro] Pardon me. I was mistaken. Pimentel is from television. Are you not from television also?

[Urbizu] [Answer indistinct]

[Castro] I mistook the channels. From which channel is Pimentel?

[Urbizu] Channel 23.

[Castro] And you are from Channel 10. Is there rivalry between the two channels? Competition?

[Urbizu] No, Commander. I should like you to elaborate a little bit more on the results of the dialog. What was decided this morning between the Cuban commission and the Cuban community?

[Castro] Between the Cuban commission and the Cuban community? Nothing, because the commission is the same as the community. You must mean between the community's committee and us. [applause] Very well. I explained the agreements we had reached in principle. And we decided to make a record of these agreements and on the session...the essential things and the things of most interest. These backed up the statements we had made on the proposals we had made last time regarding the release of 3,000 prisoners [imprisoned] for crimes against the security of the state and 600 for violation of immigration laws which we call illegal departures. And we do not consider political crimes or those of a counter-revolutionary nature, but in the past they were somewhat intermingled. And it seemed to us that it was logical to include them. We said that some of these wanted to go to the United States and that it was necessary to get an answer from the United States on whether or not it was willing to receive the prisoners who wanted to go to the United States. The Cuban Government based itself on the responsibility of the United States, due to the policy of governments previous to that of Carter which, in our judgment, led many persons into counterrevolutionary activities. And in analyzing the problems of people who had been in jail, their difficulties and certain rejection, we believed that in order to solve the problem of these persons we had to facilitate or authorize their departure from this country if they so desired. Of course, not all want to go. Many who have been imprisoned have been integrated into our society perfectly. Even many of those still in prison do not want to leave the country. I want you to know that the prisoners have friends and relatives not only in the United States. They have relatives and friends here. And it must be said that many of their relatives are completely integrated into the revolution. Many of their relatives are party members. And many of the relatives are members...[Castro corrects himself] the sons are members of the communist youth organization. These realities exist in our country. And many of them do not want [to leave] and want to be integrated into our society. Naturally, we have to wage a struggle because there have been 20 years of antagonism and problems. And we are making the effort and trying so that everyone who wants to stay can work and become involved in the normal activities of the country.

That is our desire and we struggle for that. Not always do we accomplish it but we try. On the other hand, there are prisoners who have relatives in the United States or have circles of friends there and want to go to the United States or we have felt that the authorization of departure for those who want to leave is the most correct solution and, of course, to assimilate and incorporate those who want to remain in this country. The U.S. Government already has given an answer regarding the prisoners, the ones still in prison. It gave a positive answer. It said yes, that it was willing to accept the ones who want to leave for the United States. The U.S. Government,however, has given no reply with regard to former prisoners. And I think that the U.S. Government has as much responsibility toward the former prisoners as with those who are still in prison. Thousands had been in jail and already have been released. And we said that we are willing to grant the same prerogatives to those who want to go abroad and that they could do so. But the U.S. Government has not given a categorical answer to this problem. In other words, it is differentiating between the status of those still in prison and those who already have been released, but many of these may have relatives in the United States and circles of friends in the United States and some of them may have had difficulties finding jobs [here]. Now then, we say that the United States has moral obligations to these former prisoners, men who in some cases were imprisoned for many years. Why is the United States reticent now? Why is the United States making it difficult for these people to travel to the United States? That is what we do not understand and that is the problem that has not been solved. Let us say that the status of [present] prisoners has been resolved and it is a positive step. And it enables us to go on...[Castro turns to noise of undetermined nature] is the noise over? It enables us to go on with the purpose of releasing the 3,000 prisoners for crimes against the security of the state and the 600 for illegal departures. And in this regard we have formalized the agreement today. And, despite the obstacles created by the U.S. Government, we persist in our willingness to authorize the departure of those among the former prisoners who want to go to the United States or some other country.

[Urbizu] Commander: Several members of the committee suggested to you [words indistinct] former prisoners as was the case 13 or 14 years ago with Camarioca. [Cuba's authorization of mass departures from Camarioca in 1965] Why did you reject that?

[Castro] Actually, some spoke of that. We said that it was not necessary to resort to such drastic measures. We prefer that the U.S. Government reconsider its position, facilitate the travel and authorize the admission of former prisoners who want to go to the United States. And we hope that this problem can be solved without need for drastic measures. We prefer that this be resolved in a rational manner. That is our position. And we are expecting the United States to provide facilities for the former prisoners and to meet its moral obligation to the former prisoners.

[(Name indistinct) L'HUMANITE] Commander in Chief.

[Castro] That is the commander in chief over there. [as heard]

[Unidentified voice] Let us begin over there....

[Harry (name indistinct) of Miami] For the moment I cannot identify myself with any publication because [words indistinct].

[Castro] Have you been dismissed from your job?

[Name indistinct] I always have been reporting for radio in Miami [words indistinct] but my question [words indistinct] I know that there is a desire [words indistinct] they are anxious for it to happen. [passage indistinct]

[Castro] I have not understood the question very well. I do not know what the embrace is, in what sense; what embrace are you talking about? Within the families which are separated, between the people who are absent, who are imprisoned, is this what you are talking about?

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] they have been separated for 20 years. There are people who want to get together with their loved ones in Cuba.

[Castro] Of course, well I would say that this problem has been essentially resolved. That is, a positive solution has been found, not only relating to the prisoners and the former prisoners, but also in making family reunification viable. This is included. We have expressed our willingness to allow the definitive exit from the country of people who are included in this concept of family reunification. And on the authorization of visits beginning in January, I believe that these embraces can take place relatively soon. If you are interested, I believe that in this month of December the first 400 prisoners can be freed.

[Unidentified reporter] On what day?

[Castro] In the second half of the month. We will try to do it before the end of the year. We will try to do it before the end of the year. Quite simply, we have already made the agreements, all that is left is the legalization, this is a mere formality, it is just a question of formality, nothing more. We have delivered the list of the first 400 [prisoners] to those invited here. We have discovered an error, a typing error. I believe that it was an error due to the rush because they had to make up all the lists. There is a name that is repeated. Therefore there is the name of a person who will be freed two times. Of course, from now until the moment in which the decree is issued, we have time to substitute this name for another, and in this way put a person one month ahead. So, 400 people will leave, people who are presently imprisoned.

[Unidentified reporter] To expand on this, what criterion was used to make up the list, if it is possible to know this? How was it resolved?

[Castro] I already explained this last time. We had a meeting, different factors, length of sentence, also conduct in jail. We considered all these factors and several other factors and criteria. But we can say that included in all categories a group of women. There are some prisoners who were jailed for crimes committed for the tyrrany also. Therefore, there are several categories, and taking into consideration discipline, because logically this has to be taken into account. The time in jail, their time remaining in jail also. I believe that those who have completed most of their time should be taken into account in their leaving. This is one of the criteria. And we are planning to deliver a list in the first half of each month on the group which will be freed.

[Bernard Shaw, ABC News] Mr President, my name is Bernard Shaw, ABC television in New York. Because of the obvious cooperation between your government and the United States, can you evaluate for us where you consider relations between your country and the United States to be at this point, given the cooperation by your government and Washington in this important program?

[Castro] To tell you the truth, I believe that relations between the United States and us are very bad. Besides, the United States has not discussed with us nor we with them this problem. We have not discussed this. We have not wanted to discuss this problem with the United States, absolutely nothing dealing with this problem of the prisoners or reunification of families. This has to do exclusively with our national sovereignty.

And therefore we have discussed this with the representatives of the Cuban community abroad, that is, we have discussed this with Cubans. [applause] The only thing we have to discuss with the United States is if they were willing or not to receive these people. And the United States I believe did the only thing it was able to do. What I cannot understand very well is how after all the rhetoric by Carter on human rights he could refuse this minimum cooperation, to not allow the entry of these people into the United States. Of course these people are not in jail because of Carter; Carter does not have any responsibility for the situation of these peoples. Carter personally has...his administration has made a positive contribution. At least there have been some gestures toward Cuba. And therefore in our judgment he stopped supporting subversive and terrorist plans against Cuba. This is Carter's contribution. But Carter, because of the inheritance he received from the empire, from that great empire which is the United States, cannot accept some and reject others. I do not see why he wants to keep Guantanamo Base on the one hand and on the other hand wants to avoid responsibility for the jailed Cubans, who were dragged into the counterrevolution by the governments preceding Carter's. It is a moral obligation of the North American state. And as such... and therefore Carter has to rise to this moral responsibility. This is our opinion. This is our viewpoint. But in reality we cannot say that relations between Cuba and the United States are going smoothly, because the blockade is maintained. And Carter inherited the blockade; he did not invent it, but he maintains it. In addition, he is trying to use it; he is trying to use the blockade as a weapon to pressure us and we believe the blockade to be a crime and the attempt to use it as an instrument of pressure is an indecency. [applause]

[Unidentified L'HUMANITE reporter] Commander in Chief, how do you explain this, how shall we say, lack of...reticence on the part of the U.S. Government in the face of Cuban Government policy on the subject of the [Cuban] community and the political prisoners. What are the fundamental reasons for this reticence?

[Castro] I should be fair. Well, I do not believe that they have shown a great enthusiasm for this. And I believe that they were confronted with a specific situation. I believe their answer in regards to the prisoners has been positive. In truth I should say this and at the last meeting we proposed this and they have given an answer. I did not expect any other answer really because I do not believe that they could avoid their moral responsibility. But the fact is that objectively they have answered and it is positive, and it facilitates the exit of the prisoners. Of course if they had not...if they had given a negative answer we would have found a solution. We also said this at the other meeting because we were willing to meet again as soon as possible and study what measures to take to carry this problem forward and resolve the problem of the prisoners, not only freeing them but also seeing them reunited with their families, seeing that they have proper working and living conditions. So we were willing to go forward, even if they had given a negative answer. But in fact they answered this positively and I believe that being courteous does not mean that one is not courageous. They have given a positive answer to this, but they have not given a clear answer. They are reticent on the former prisoners. I do not know why. I do not know if it is because they have become bored with Cubans, that they do not want Cubans there. In sum, they have changed their policy. I do not understand this very well. In truth, I do not understand this very well.

[Unidentified reporter] Mr President....

[Castro] You are discriminating against the women. There is a woman reporter who has been asking for the floor for a while, and... [does not finish thought]

[Karen De Young, Washington POST] My name is Karen De Young, of the Washington POST...

[Castro] Ah, yes, yes, I have seen you here before. I have seen some of your reports on different areas, not only on here.

[De Young] Mr President, as we have seen by our friend here, there is a part of the Cuban community in the United States which does not agree with these things. They say that this is a trick, a hoax, and a letter has come out by some, of more than 100 who are prisoners here who are against this program because they say that they do not want to be part of political negotiation. How do you answer this?

[Castro] Yes, approximately...[changes thought] In the first place it is not a part, there is a minimal part which does not agree with this. Those who do not agree are those who have lived off of the traffic and the business of the counterrevolution--business which is suffering a greater crisis than the energy crisis. [laughter] The crisis, I repeat, you do not hear? I say that the crisis of the counterrevolution is greater than the energy crisis. It is business that has failed. Many people want to continue living off of the counterrevolution, many people no, just a few want to continue living off of this. Others want to continue living from terrorism, others try to threaten, intimidate the majority of the community. They threaten them with assassinations, bombings and all of these things. The business is over. And logically they have to be against this. There are some elements which still dream about the fantastic wars of those types. There may even be some of them who are in jail. But in truth, from among some 3,600 and more [in jail] for crimes against the security of the state, there are just 100 or so who are opposed to a solution.

In this regard, we have said that we do not want volunteer prisoners here. If someone wants to remain in prison we will not allow it and that is it. It will be the reverse. We will release them. There is no problem on this. But we know what the prisoners think because we know some things. We have been giving to all the prisoners a bulletin on how people think over there [in the United States], the ones in favor of the dialog and against it. I do not know if it is deceit...[as heard] but perhaps some of them, when they find themselves in the street and when with their families, probably will say: This cannot be. I cannot believe this. This must be a lie. Perhaps in this regard it might seem to be a deceit. But I ask myself, how could they meet with their families again, how they could solve their problems because, in general, it was thought in the past that there would be an invasion from the United States and that one day a great attack on the country would take place and they would be freed. But it has been proven that, first, it was not all the might of the United States that freed all those who have been released. It was the revolutionary government that made it possible for all those thousands of prisoners to be released from prisons. It made it possible for these people to leave prison. And we have a political duty, a social duty and a revolutionary duty to find a solution even for those who have fought us. But it was the revolution and not the U.S. Government [that released them]. And in the case of those still in prison, most of them are going to be released not thanks to the might of the United States, but thanks to this dialog, thanks to these constructive and positive exchanges we have had with the representatives of the Cuban community abroad. [prolonged applause] I can assure you that these problems would not have been solved without the dialog and the rest is a lie, an intrigue and a sophism. There were people abroad, especially in the United States, who had the courage to defy the threats, terrorism and insinuations or warnings that they were going to be murdered and bombed. They had the courage to defy this. I believe they had real courage because one must be aware of the conditions because terrorist elements in the United States have been imposing their law on the Cuban community abroad. They have been imposing their law. [indistinct shouts, applause] Simply said, there was a group of courageous persons, morally courageous. Without weapons they decided to defy all that. They defied the traffickers of war, a war which they never waged themselves because they sent others to wage it. They defied the terrorists.

They defied the counterrevolutionaries who have done nothing except to slander and say horrible things about that group of persons. And they defied them without weapons. Let us say that since the times of Mahatma Gandhi there has not been a more admirable peaceful struggle tnan this peaceful struggle without weapons. [prolonged applause] They did what the U.S. Government did not dare do because, if the U.S. Government wanted to finish the terrorists, it could do it immediately. The U.S. Government knows perfectly well who the terrorists are, what weapons they have, where they live, what they do. If the U.S. Government does not put an end to terrorism, it is because it does not want to or because it is afraid of the terrorists. But I say that this group of persons has defied all that. And I think they have great merit. Nevertheless, now that they have obtained the results which could not have been obtained without this dialog, there probably will appear now the last-minute heroes, the last-minute saviors who will present themselves as the ones who are solving the problems and are going to get transportation and are going to solve the situation of these persons. Many of them have been opposed to the dialog. Actually, there is hypocrisy in all this. They say: We want the prisoners released but we do not want a dialog. And actually, the prisoners would not be released without a dialog. And the prisoners were the first to understand this. And we have kept them fully informed of everything and how everyone thinks over there in Miami. There never has been so much freedom of information in any prison in the world. They have been informed of everything. And we know how they think. And we know that the inmense majority are angry over these positions. And I should caution you also that they are indignant because of the fact that the U.S. Government is placing obstacles before the solution of their problem. I believe there is a certain order here.

They defied the counterrevolutionaries who have done nothing except to slander and say horrible things about that group of persons. And they defied them without weapons. Let us say that since the times of Mahatma Gandhi cautioned you also that they are indignant because of the fact that the U.S. Government is placing obstacles to the solution of their problem. I believe there is a certain order here. [as heard, apparently referring to turns of questioners]

[Alfredo Munoz, AFP] Commander: At the beginning, the positive gestures of the Carter administration included the suspension of espionage flights over Cuba.

[Castro] Yes. Yes.

[Munoz] However, in what you recently termed as a pseudo-crisis, renewal of such flights was announced. In the past the Government of Cuba, in what was interpreted as a contribution to international peace, had tolerated in silence those flights which actually, according to law, constituted a violation of sovereignty. Those flights continue. Does the Cuban Government maintain its position?

[Castro] Look here, I am going to answer you. As a matter of fact, one of Carter's gestures we had appreciated most was the act of suspending those flights. And one of the things that irritates us most about Carter now is the fact that he has renewed those flights without justification of any sort because there never will be justification for this. All this has been a great farce, a farce. But, as I said the last time, the MiG-23's have been in Cuba approximately a year. They began operations more than 8 months ago. It was known by everyone. The United States knew this perfectly well. And it knows perfectly well that these airplanes are tactical and defensive. We do not recognize the right of the United States to control our weapons. This, in the first place, is a question of principles. Hear me well. And we never intend to give an accounting to the United States on the weapons we have. I give you this argument simply to show it was a farce. All of a sudden there was a leak. It has to be a leak in quotes because something they already knew was leaked. And, without anyone knowing why, for what reason or for what purpose, they invented this pseudo-crisis of the MiG-23's and used it as a pretext to violate our space. This is a flagrant violation of our country's space and sovereignty and we have the right to fire at those [espionage] planes. Listen well. This does not mean that we have made a decision on this. We have not made a decision. We try not to complicate problems. In a few words, neither do we have any desire to complicate the situation for Carter, making his problems more difficult. In other words, we not not want to create difficulties for him and place him in embarrassing situations. We do not want this. We do have the duty, as responsible men, to act with much equanimity in relation to all these problems. Therefore, we have made no deicsion in this regard. We have not made a decision to down those planes. It remains to be proven because it is said that these are very sophisticated planes. The first thing that would happen would be, let us say, a competition between the antiaircraft weapons and the plane. But this is not the problem. We do not want to aggravate (?his) difficulties. We do not want, I repeat, to place Carter in an embarrasing position. However, we are not willing to give him any guarantee or any assurance on those spy airplanes. Now then, on the other hand, there has been only one violation up to now. If I am not mistaken, it took place on 12 September at 10, after 1030, around 1030 in the morning. There was a single violation. There has not been any other violation. I think it was 12 September. I understand that indeed it was 12 September. That was a big balloon they inflated and I do not know if the balloon is losing air now. Someone inflated it. Moreover, I think that this inflated balloon was not good for Carter's administration because his enemies could used it to show him as a weak man or something like that. And that is the sad thing in all of this. Someone inflates a balloon in the United States, someone leaks a report, someone creates an artificial problem, and then governments think they have to act accordingly. That is the reality.

[(Name indistinct), Miami HERALD] Are you planning to release the six North American political prisoners in the near future?

[Castro] No. For now we have no plans to release the--I believe they are four--North American political prisoners. That problem we can discuss with the U.S. Government and, for the present, we have no plan to release these prisoners. And, of course, they could not be this object of this dialog between the Cuban community abroad or the representatives of the Cuban community abroad and the representatives of the Cuban community on the island.

[Unidentified newsman] Mr President: You expressed an appreciation for an understanding of the problem that President Carter has inherited and you described relations between Havana and Washington as being pretty bad. To try to overcome this situation would you consider inviting President Carter to come to Havana to discuss this problem face-to-face?

[Castro] I would dare talk face-to-face with Carter anyplace. Of course, I have powerful arguments to present to Carter, solid arguments to present to Carter. But we are not planning in the least to invite Carter to come to Havana because it would be something childish. It would be childish to invite Carter to come to Havana because the first thing that should be asked is if Carter can come to Havana, if Carter is free to come to Havana. This is the first thing that must be asked. If he could come and he dares to defy all the reactionary and anachronistic elements in the United States and come to Havana, [prolonged applause] I would say: All right. [applause]

This is the first thing to find out. One has to ask him if he can come to Havana. Because we know that in the United States these things are very difficult. Everything, a lot of pressure from all over and many reactionary elements and many elements which are against peace and one will have to ask Carter if he can come before the elections of after the elections--before the presidential elections or after the presidential elections, before the congressional elections or after the congressional elections, in the end, one finds out that Carter can never come to Havana. [laughter] So therefore, why are we going to invite Carter to come to Havana? He has to say if he is free to do this.

[Unidentified reporter] Mr President, my question is, would you formally invite him to Havana? My question is would you formally invite President Carter to Havana?

[Castro] In truth, no, I would not invite him because I do not like to invite someone just for the sake of inviting someone, knowing that one is not free to come to Havana. Well, but this is the least of it, besides, possibly Carter thinks that because Cuba is a small little country, why bother to come here. [laughter] It is this way, I know them, we have struggled against five administrations, this is the sixth, and we do not know how this is going to develop. But always when a new administration comes, and each one has its theories and their things. I, in addition...because of a question of justice, I should say that in our judgment that the best [administration] to have come in regards to Cuba up to now has been Carter's. Well, up to now, but this has started to change. Two important things have happened, two important things: one of them was when the problem of Shaba arose. They deceived Carter, they tricked him and caused him to make a false accusation against Cuba. The worst of this is that we had had contact with the interests office as a gesture on (?information) we had, and we explained Cuba's position. And 24-hours later the information was leaked, or 36 hours [later] and then a brutal accusation was made, saying that Cuba was responsible for this, as if we were speaking a lie. And we do not lie to anyone. We do not lie to insignificant creatures, we do not lie to children.

It seems to us that by lying to a child one lowers onself. I believe that whoever lies to the all-powerful master of a great empire lowers himself even more. And we have not done this to anyone. And this was practically an imputation, saying that we were liars. And the other problem: When the United States unilaterally declared the preferential 200-mile sea limit. We historically had fished in those seas. They told us that they were ready to talk with us, to respect Cuba's historical rights to fish in these seas. Everything was a hoax. They set such requirements and such conditions that it was absolutely impossible to fish in these seas. So therefore, and now there is this irritating violation of our airspace by the SR-71. Such serious and grave things have occurred.

[Unidentified reporter] So you would not formally invite President Carter?

[Castro] Well, if he wants to come as a tourist he can come to Cuba [words indistinct]. [applause]

[Unidentified reporter] We are speaking about not only the United States but I think that the problem, as you have clearly explained it, Cuban...[word indistinct]

[Castro] If that is Spanish, it is a little rough.

[Unidentified reporter continues] Therefore, we can actually say that Venezuela is another of the countries [words indistinct] to which a part of the Cubans want to leave for. Has there been any other Latin American country, any other European country, which in one or another official way has gone to the Cuban authorities to offer themselves to receive them?

[Castro] No. We have had the report on the Venezuelan Government's willingness and it seems very positive and constructive to us. Venezuela has an excellent position with regards to this problem--a willingness to collaborate in solutions, willing to receive prisoners, former prisoners, and willing to use transportation. The Venezuelan Government has had an excellent position. The other governments have not made proposals, and I believe that there would be other governments which would be willing. I believe that the Mexican Government, the Spanish Government [would]. I am sure that if their cooperation was necessary to resolve the problem, I am absolutely sure that they would not refuse.

[Unidentified reporter] Excuse me, I believe that not only for your part have they gone to neighboring countries but that the prisoners and former prisoners have had the intention of traveling to other countries?

[Castro] Possibly. Undoubtedly, what happens? The major part of the community is in the United States. The greater part. And the greater part has relatives there. And they have their circles of friends there. This is...therefore the largest part has always been inclined...has had the need to travel to the United States. But there are some who have relatives in Venezuela, Spain and some of them do want to travel to Venezuela and Spain. But I do not see that it is a problem. First of all, the number is not great and secondly, these governments have not placed any obstacles in the way of these trips.

[Unidentified reporter] Commander, having approved the freeing of the majority of the political prisoners, the reunification of Cuban families and the right of the community to return to their country, what do you expect in return from this community?

[Castro] What?

[Unidentified reporter] What do you expect in return from this community?

[Castro] Look here, we follow a policy with principle, we always do what appears to be the most correct and constructive in each situation. We were not able to think about this before Carter's administration, this is the truth. While the U.S. Government was the principal leader and mover of counterrevolutionary activities in Cuba, this could not have had a solution. I believe that the U.S. Government role has ceased. I believe that this is positive. We do not ask ourselves what we expect in exchange for a revolution. We ask ourselves if the revolution is correct and if the revolution is positive. In the same way, in regards to this we ask ourselves if what we are doing is revolutionary and positive. And we do believe that what we are doing is revolutionary and positive. And I believe that the revolutionary things, the correct things and the constructive things always benefit all the people, both the people outside Cuba and the people in Cuba. One has to keep in mind that if this migration reached such a large volume and if the counterrevolution achieved a certain force in Cuba, if this division was produced, it was due in a large part to the power and influence of the United States. I believe that this, above all else, will mean a defeat of our people's enemies.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] members of the community [words indistinct] with North American authorities with a personal message from the Carter government or from Carter personally?

[Castro] With members of the community?

[Unidentified reporter answers] Sixty-three [words indistinct].

[Castro] No, the members of the community were there but Carter did not receive them.

[Unidentified reporter continues] No...

[Castro] He did not receive them...no, they met with some department and if I am not wrong, they met at the Justice Department, making suggestions, but Carter did not receive them.

[Unidentified reporter] And did they tell you why this happened, why...

[Castro] No...

[Unidentified reporter] Because of ice [as heard] therefore they were [words indistinct].

[Castro] No, it has nothing to do with ice. It has to do with Carter being very occupied, and they did not have any opinion on this. They did not express an opinion on this but they made other suggestions. On the other hand there were public proposals by the U.S. Government on this. And on the other hand maybe there are people in the United States who are trying to ignore this group of Cubans who have been making an effort in this direction. This is possible. This is my understanding, but they have not made any judgment here on this, on this particular matter.

[Unidentified reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Castro] I believe it is around three in the morning already and both you and the rest of the people have to rest or sleep. Let me tell you that tomorrow you reporters will be handed a copy of the record.

[Unidentified reporter] Tomorrow or today?

[Castro] Well, today. In other words, within a few hours. I believe that they are printing them now.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] publish the official list of [words indistinct].

[Castro] Well, this will have to come out in the OFFICIAL GAZETTE, because this has to be written up from scratch. I believe it will take 8 or 10 days for this, to be in the OFFICIAL GAZETTE.

[Unidentified reporter] A short time ago you told us that members of the Cuban community in exile [as heard] will be able to come [here], beginning in January. I would like to know what initial criteria will be applied to the first groups which will come in January.

[Castro] We have proposed that in this first stage they come in tourist groups and not individually, except in cases for humanitarian reasons, which will be justified by individual cases, no doubt about it. This situation is a little uncertain. The conditions are not optimal for allowing this to develop fully. There will be some people excluded because of their conduct and background, but it will be minimal.

[Unidentified reporter] Can you tell us exactly what part has indicated its willingness to leave [words indistinct] or their wish to leave the country?

[Castro] I believe that she is speaking in Spanish, but in any case can someone translate? [laughter]

[Unidentified reporter] What part of those who are on the list have expressed their wish to...

[Castro] Ah, of the first list of 400, 82 of them have clearly stated...but some, some of them have stated that others who were not on this list have expressed their willingness to leave. I figure that it will be around 100; it might go up to 120, 150 maximum out of this first list of 400. But I see, at a minimum, that 250 will be left vacant. But we are proposing that it would be useful, now that the United States has expressed that it is willing to receive 400 per month, instead of receiving...if there are vacancies, of about 250 or 280 places, that among the 400 places an equal number of former prisoners who want to travel to the United States be included. We are willing, if there are 400 and only 100 are going to travel to the United States for example, that the other 300 can be former prisoners. [applause] Keep up the contacts.

1,500 POLITICAL PRISONERS TO GO TO VENEZUELA

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[Text] Havana, 8 Dec (AFP)--Prior to Christmas, Venezuela is going to establish an air bridge with Havana to take 1,500 former political prisoners and their relatives out of Cuba, it was announced here tonight.

Jorge Roblejo Lorie, president of the "committee of the 100" [as received], one of the groups of Cuban exiles who are holding a meeting with the government here, said that the first group would spend Christmas eve in Caracas. Roblejo Lorie and close to 150 other prominent Cuban exiles are expected to sign a formal document at midnight tonight summing up the result of their dialog with President Fidel Castro. There might be a slight delay because the Cuban Council of State was meeting 1 hour before midnight to approve the agreements before they are signed. Another participant in the talks, Miami banker Bernardo Benes, expressed confidence that the Cuban Government will tonight--in a new gesture of good will, pardon 400 political prisoners who are currently in jail.